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'The Impact of AS and A-Level Moving Image Arts on the Creative Industries in Northern Ireland': A report commissioned by Northern Ireland Screen

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**An Exploration of the Impact of AS/A-Level Moving Image
Arts on the Creative Industries in Northern Ireland**

RESEARCH REPORT

30th June 2018

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Acknowledgements

Northern Ireland Screen commissioned and provided the funding for this study.

Sincere thanks to all participants who completed the survey or took part in a research interview. Your time and effort is greatly appreciated.

Introduction

Moving Image Arts A-Level was first introduced in Northern Ireland in 2006. It was the first qualification of its kind to be introduced anywhere in the United Kingdom (UK). It is a unique qualification in digital filmmaking and the numbers of students undertaking it at AS and A-Level continue to increase year upon year. It has been argued that the moving image is the predominant medium of the 21st century and it is a vital dimension of the creative industries. The rapid growth of digital media technologies has made the creative industries increasingly accessible and attractive to young people. There is no doubt that the growth of these industries is vital to the continued economic, social and cultural development of Northern Ireland and the potential is limitless. In 2015 the Moving Image Arts qualification was determined as exemplary project at the launch of “A Framework for Film Education in Europe” (EU Creative Europe programme). It is a perfect example of how public bodies, teachers and industry can work together to deliver a qualification with added value for students and which prepares them for careers in the creative industries.

Figures from Northern Ireland Screen show unprecedented growth in the uptake of the subject. In 2006, 69 students were entered for the A-Level qualification. In 2016, 1319 students undertook GCSE, AS and A-Level Moving Image Arts in Northern Ireland. This represents an increase of 230 candidates over the 2015 entry. In 2006, 7 schools offered the Moving Image Arts A-Level qualification. In 2016, 50 schools are now offer Moving Image Arts at GCSE, 100 schools are offering it at AS-Level and 76 schools at A-Level.

Aim of the Study

The aim of this study is to determine the impact that AS/A-Level Moving Image Arts has had on the Creative Industries in Northern Ireland.

Objectives of the Study

1. To determine the numbers and attributes of students undertaking Moving Image Arts AS/A-Level over the last 11 years in Northern Ireland.
2. To examine the destinations of these students after AS/A-Level and into employment.
3. To explore the views of those who have completed AS/A-level Moving Image Arts in the last 11 years on how the subject affected their continuing education and/or employment.
4. To ascertain the views of a small sample of academics within Creative Arts on the impact of AS/A-Level Moving Image Arts in third level education.
5. To explore the views of a small sample of Industry Professionals with regards to the impact the AS/A-Level Moving Image Arts has had on the sector.
6. To provide a final report and recommendations.

Methodology

A mixed methods approach was been employed to meet the aim and objectives of the study across four strands as below:

Strand 1	Contextual Data collected from all relevant organisations about the students taking AS/A-Level Moving Image Arts
Strand 2	Questionnaire to past students of AS/A-Level Moving Image Arts
Strand 3	Interviews with Academics at University Level teaching courses relevant to Moving Image Arts
Strand 4	Interviews with Industry Professionals

Ethical Approval

Ethical approval was gained through Queens University in December 2017. All ethical principles were strictly adhered to.

Strand 1 Methodology: Contextual Data

Data was obtained from Northern Ireland Screen and CCEA on the numbers of students who have completed AS and A-Level Moving Image Arts since its introduction in 2006. This data was broken down into variables including gender, school type, grade achieved and year of entry. Numbers of students who took GCSE Moving Image Arts in each year was also obtained. Contact with the Department of Education for Northern Ireland in December 2017/January 2018 revealed that they do not provide aggregated reports on the qualifications and destinations of school leavers by specific subject nor could they provide the destinations of those students who undertook Moving Image Arts qualifications by year and associated variables.

Both Queens University and Ulster University were approached in December 2017/January 2018 for the details of the degrees that students with AS/A-Level Moving Image Arts are currently undertaking and have undertaken in the past (since 2006). Both Universities were able to provide this information from 2010 onwards.

Strand 2 Methodology: Survey

Access to contact details for past students of AS/A-Level Moving Image Arts proved to be very challenging. It was established that no databases of contact details (postal or email addresses) exist within Northern Ireland Screen, CCEA or the Department of Education for Northern Ireland. Therefore, it was not possible to send questionnaires directly to the intended respondents. Neither University in Northern Ireland were willing to send an email to all students with a link to the questionnaire. In response to this, a range of distribution measures were designed as below:

1. Northern Ireland Screen hosted the link to the questionnaire on their website with some information about the study inviting people to complete it if they had ever undertaken A or AS Moving Image Arts.
2. A link to the questionnaire was posted on Media Therapy Facebook Group – a group for Creative Industry Professionals based in Northern Ireland with membership exceeding 5,000 people.
3. Lecturers at Queens University and Ulster University agreed to email a link to the questionnaire to their own cohorts of students in relevant subjects.

Due to the variation in distribution methods of the online questionnaires, two different questionnaires were designed in collaboration with Northern Ireland Screen in January/February 2018. The first questionnaire was designed for University students only and for distribution through Queens University and Ulster University. This questionnaire asked respondents about their reasons for choosing Moving Image Arts at AS/A-Level, how they feel it helped them in their chosen educational pathway, what they are studying at university, what career path they want to follow and how Moving Image Arts facilitated that, improvements to the AS/A-Level, who they would recommend the course to and why and the impact of the BFI Academies. Questionnaire can be view at

<https://www.surveymonkey.co.uk/r/UniversityStudentsMovingImageArtsQuestionnaire>

The second questionnaire was designed for the general public and included all the questions from the student questionnaire but also included further questions about employment and chosen careers. Questionnaire can be viewed at

<https://www.surveymonkey.co.uk/r/PublicMovingImageArtsQuestionnaire>

Online electronic questionnaires were used and responses were returned directly to the researcher anonymously. A participant information sheet was included at the start of the online questionnaire explaining why the study is being undertaken and what each recipient is being asked to do (Please see Participant Information Sheet at Appendix 1).

Strand 3 Methodology: Interviews with Academics

With Creative Arts degree programmes offered at both Queens University and Ulster University, it was considered important to gather the views of academic who have been involved with these programmes over the last 11 years with regards to the impact that AS/A-Level Moving Image Arts has had on the educational curriculum.

Six academics were selected randomly from the staff lists of relevant Schools, three from each University. Each academic was required to meet the inclusion criteria set out below:

- be lecturer grade or above at either Queens University or Ulster University
- be currently actively teaching on a creative arts degree programme
- have been involved in creative arts at third level education for at least the last 5 years in Northern Ireland
- be willing to participant
- be able to consent to take part

All were approached via email requesting their participation in the study. A participant information sheet was included with the email (Please see Appendix 2).

Written informed consent was obtained from all participants (Please see Appendix 3 for a copy of the consent form). Interviews focused on the participant's views on Moving Image Arts AS/A-Level, their views on the impact it has had on students and third level education over the last 11 years (Please see Appendix 4 for interview schedule).

Strand 4 Methodology: Interviews with Industry Professionals

It was also considered important to gather the views of industry professionals and experts in Northern Ireland to ascertain the impact of AS/A-Level Moving Image Arts on the Creative Industries in Northern Ireland. Six industry professionals were selected randomly from the staff lists of production companies in Northern Ireland. Each industry professional was required to meet the inclusion criteria set out below:

- be currently working in the creative industries in Northern Ireland
- have been involved in creative arts industry for at least the last 5 years in Northern Ireland
- be willing to participant
- be able to consent to take part

All were approached via email requesting their participation in the study. A participant information sheet was included with the email (Please see Appendix 5).

Written informed consent was obtained from all participants (Please see Appendix 6 for a copy of the consent form). The interviews focused on the participant's views on AS/A-Level Moving Image Arts and the impact it has had on the creative industries in Northern Ireland (Please see Appendix 7 for interview schedule).

Findings

Strand 1: Contextual Data

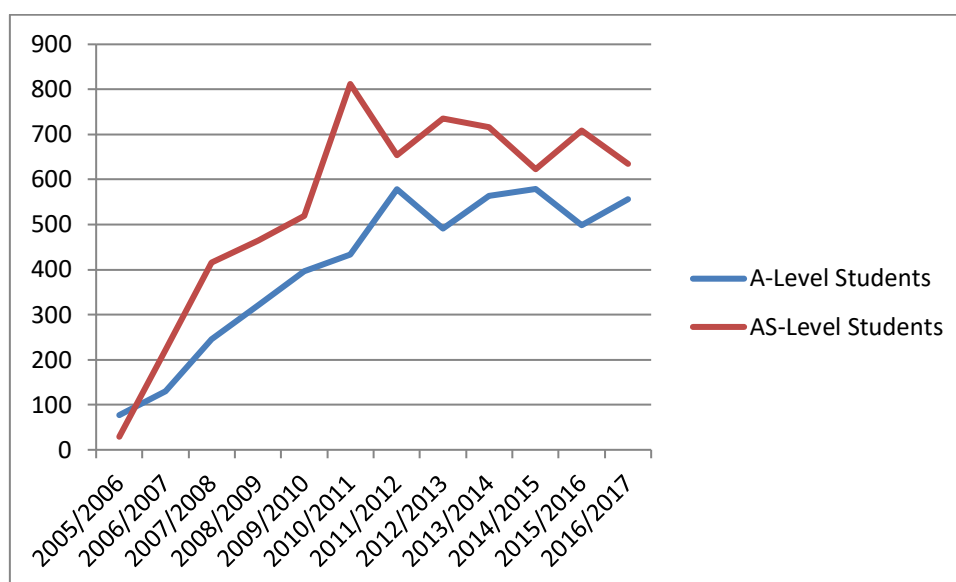
Number of Students undertaking Moving Image Arts

The numbers of students undertaking AS-Level and A-Level Moving Image Arts for each year from 2003/2004 (for AS-Level) and from 2005/2006 (for A-Level) to 2016/2017 are shown below:

Year	AS-Level			A-Level
2003/2004	60			-
2004/2005	95			-
2005/2006	29			77
2006/2007	221			130
2007/2008	415			246
2008/2009*	64 (old)	401 (new)	465 (total)	321
2009/2010	519			397
2010/2011	812			433
2011/2012	654			578
2012/2013	735			491
2013/2014	716			564
2014/2015	623			579
2015/2016	709			498
2016/2017*	97 (old)	537 (new)	634 (total)	556

*In these two years (2008/2009 and 2016/2017) students were able to sit the old specification and the new specification. Figures are presented for the old and new specifications and the total number overall.

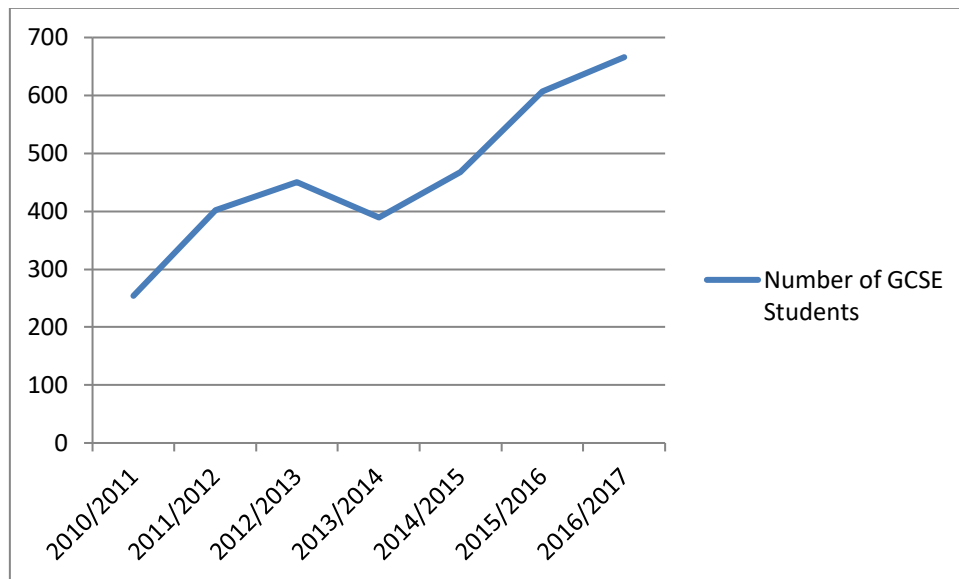
The line graph below illustrates the numbers of both AS and A Level students from 2005/2006 undertaking Moving Image Arts. The increase in uptake is clearly evident over the last 12 years. It is interesting to note that the dips in AS-Level uptake are reflected in rises in A-Level uptake. Additionally, the first year that GCSE Moving Image Arts was offered (2010/2011), there was a spike in students taking AS-Level Moving Image Arts.



The numbers of students undertaking GCSE Moving Image Arts for each year from 2010/2011 to 2016/2017 are shown below:

Year	GCSE
2010/2011	254
2011/2012	402
2012/2013	450
2013/2014	389
2014/2015	467
2015/2016	607
2016/2017	666

The line graph below illustrates the numbers of GCSE students from 2010/2011 to 2016/2017 undertaking Moving Image Arts.



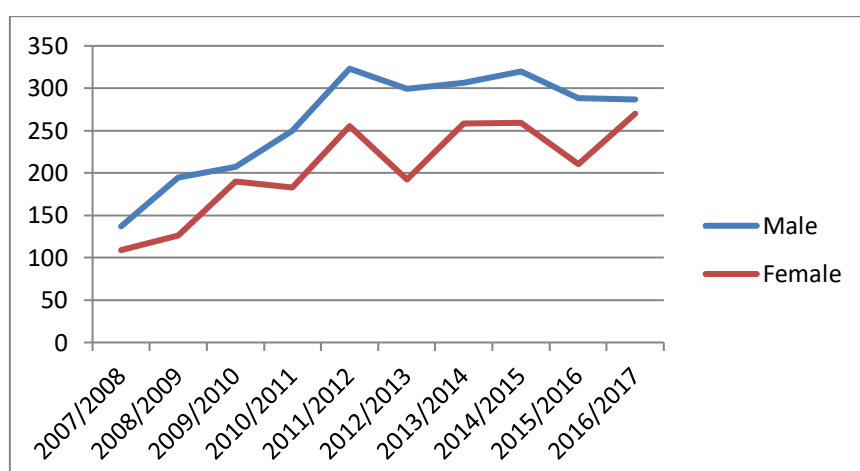
It is clear from the illustration of numbers of GCSE students taking Moving Image Arts that there has been a steady increase in numbers from it was first offered in 2010/2011. Only one year has a slight decrease in numbers (2013/2014).

Gender breakdown

The Table below shows the breakdown of males and females undertaking A-Level Moving Image Arts over the last ten years from 2006/2007 to 2016/2017. For every year, there are more boys undertaking the A-Level than girls, however the smallest different between the genders is in the last year that statistics are available for (2016/2017). This year also shows the highest number of girls taking Moving Image Arts at A-Level since the A-Level began.

Year	Male		Female	
	Number	%	Number	%
2016/2017	287	51.5	270	48.5
2015/2016	288	57.8	210	42.2
2014/2015	320	55.2	259	44.8
2013/2014	306	54.2	258	45.8
2012/2013	299	60.8	192	39.2
2011/2012	323	55.8	255	44.2
2010/2011	250	57.7	183	42.3
2009/2010	207	52.1	190	47.9
2008/2009	195	60.7	126	39.3
2007/2008	137	55.7	109	44.3

The line graph below illustrates the difference in gender undertaking Moving Image Arts at A-Level over the last ten years. It also demonstrates the closing gap between genders in the latest year that statistics are available for (2016/2017)



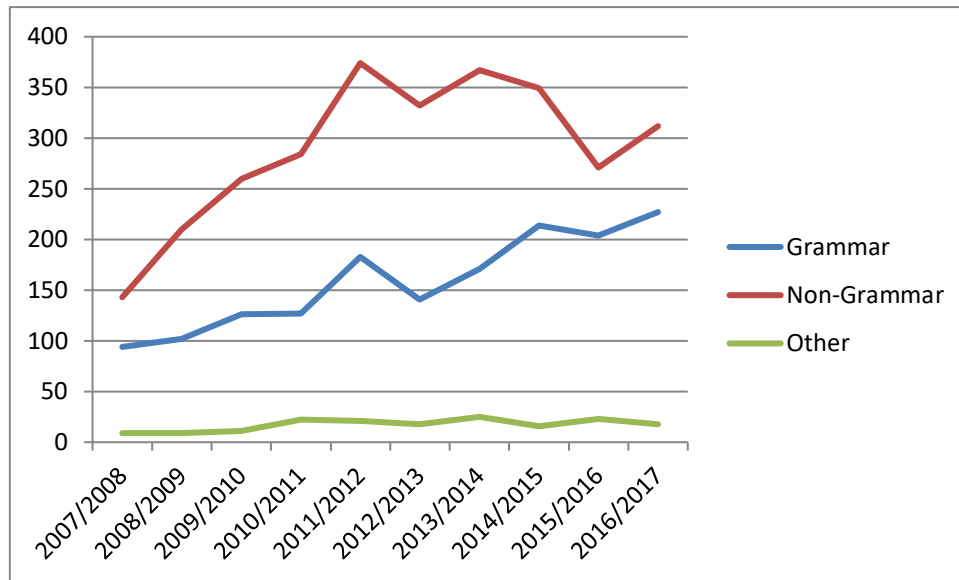
School Management Type

The table below shows the breakdown of numbers of students taking A-Level Moving Images Arts over the last ten years broken down into school types of Grammar, Non-Grammar, Further Education and Other. The numbers of students taking the A-Level under the 'Other' category have remained similar across the last ten years. However, the numbers of Grammar School students undertaking the A-Level has steadily increased over the last ten years to its highest numbers in the last year that statistics are available for (2016/2017).

Numbers of Non-Grammar students taking the A-Level has been the highest across all school types over the last ten years. Only 1 student has undertaken the A-Level through a Further Education College over the last ten years.

	Grammar		Non-Grammar		Further Education		Other	
	Number	%	Number	%	Number	%	Number	%
2016/2017	227	40.8	312	56	0	0	18	3.2
2015/2016	204	41	271	54.4	0	0	23	4.6
2014/2015	214	37	349	60.3	0	0	16	2.7
2013/2014	171	30.3	367	65.1	1	0.2	25	4.4
2012/2013	141	28.7	332	67.6	0	0	18	3.7
2011/2012	183	31.7	374	64.7	0	0	21	3.6
2010/2011	127	29.3	284	65.6	0	0	22	5.1
2009/2010	126	31.7	260	65.5	0	0	11	2.8
2008/2009	102	31.8	210	65.4	0	0	9	2.8
2007/2008	94	38.2	143	58.1	0	0	9	3.7

The line graph below illustrates the differences in numbers taking A-Level Moving Image Arts in Grammar, Non-Grammar and 'Other' over the last ten years. It illustrates clearly the closing gap in numbers of students taking the A-Level at Grammar and Non-Grammar schools.

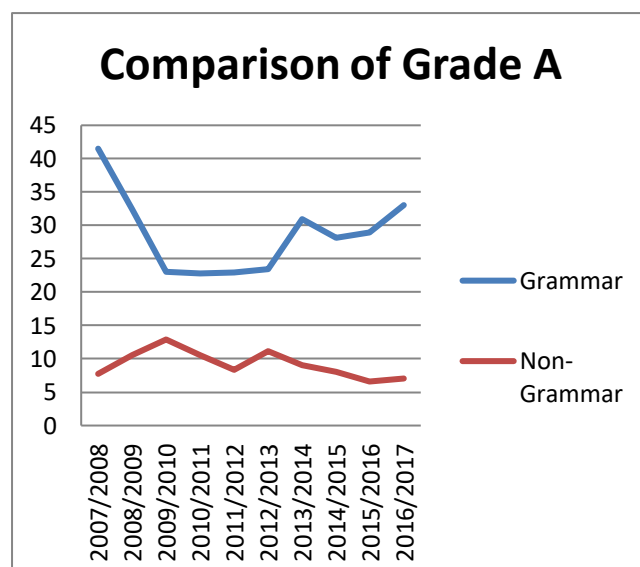
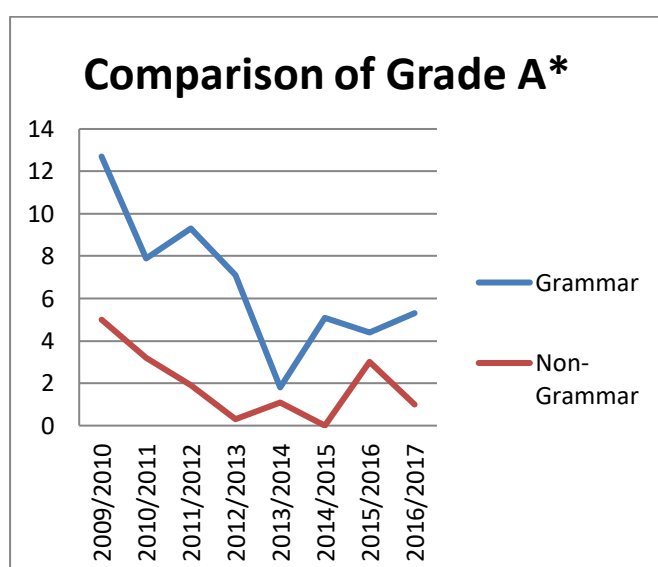


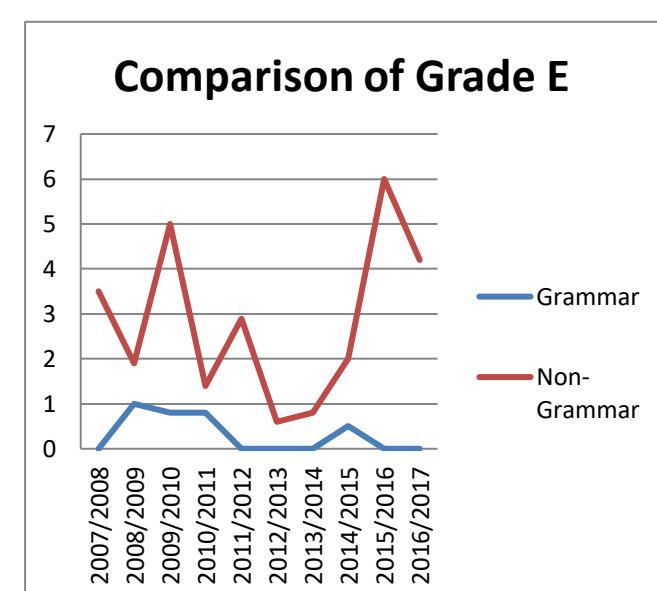
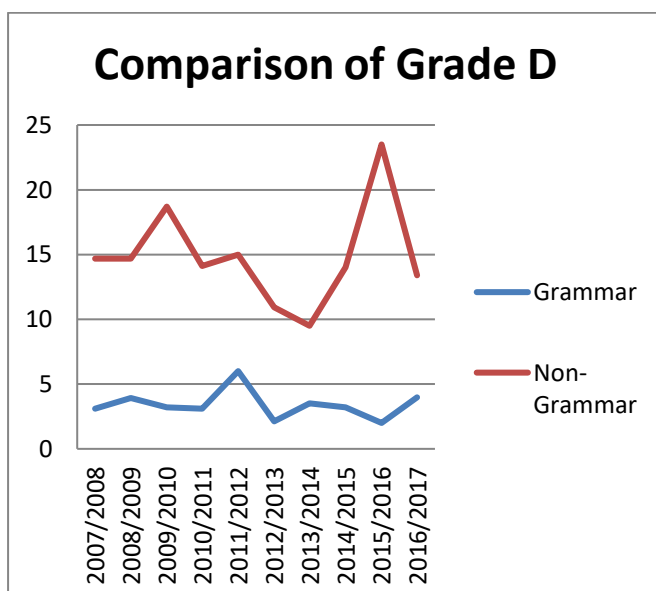
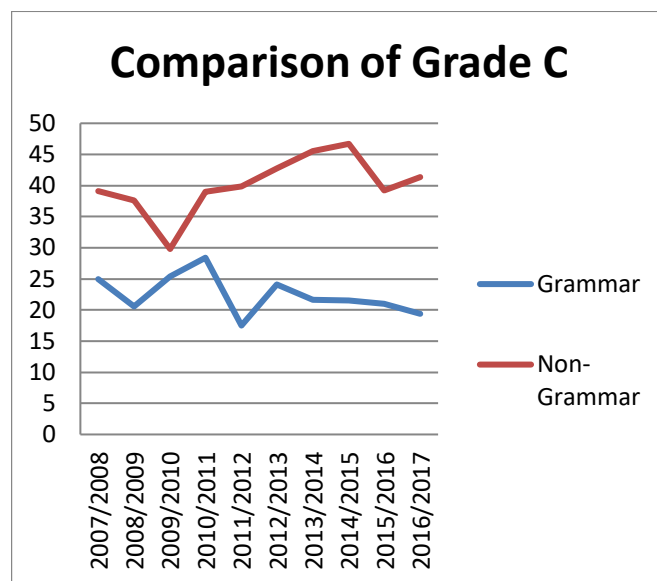
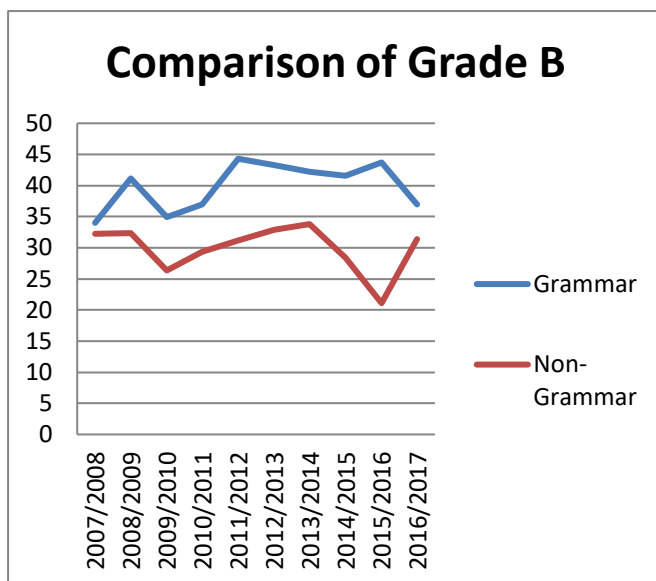
Grades

Grammar and Non-Grammar

The Table below shows a comparison of grades for A-Level Moving Image Arts between Grammar and Non-Grammar students over the last ten years. It is clear that grades achieved by students at Grammar Schools are higher than grades achieved by students at Non-Grammar schools.

	A* (%)		A (%)		B (%)		C (%)		D (%)		E (%)	
	G	NG	G	NG	G	NG	G	NG	G	NG	G	NG
2016/2017	5.3	1	33	7	37	31.4	19.4	41.4	4	13.4	0	4.2
2015/2016	4.4	3	28.9	6.6	43.7	21.1	21	39.2	2	23.5	0	6
2014/2015	5.1	0	28.1	8	41.6	28.4	21.5	46.7	3.2	14	0.5	2
2013/2014	1.8	1.1	30.9	9	42.2	33.8	21.6	45.5	3.5	9.5	0	0.8
2012/2013	7.1	0.3	23.4	11.1	43.3	32.9	24.1	42.7	2.1	10.9	0	0.6
2011/2012	9.3	1.9	22.9	8.3	44.3	31.2	17.5	39.9	6	15	0	2.9
2010/2011	7.9	3.2	22.8	10.5	37	29.3	28.4	39	3.1	14.1	0.8	1.4
2009/2010	12.7	5	23	12.9	34.9	26.4	25.4	29.8	3.2	18.7	0.8	5
2008/2009	-	-	32.4	10.5	41.1	32.4	20.6	37.6	3.9	14.7	1	1.9
2007/2008	-	-	41.5	7.7	34	32.2	25	39.1	3.1	14.7	0	3.5





The six line charts above illustrate the differences in grades between Grammar and Non-Grammar students taking A-Level Moving Image Arts across the last ten years. At the top grades of A* and A, the difference in achievement is obvious with Grammar school students achieving a much higher percentage of these top grades than Non-Grammar students. At the other end of the grade spectrum, it is evident that Non-Grammar school students are achieving much higher percentages of Grades D and E than Grammar school students.

Grades by Gender

The Table below shows the A-Level Moving Image Arts grades from A* to E over the last 10 years broken down by gender.

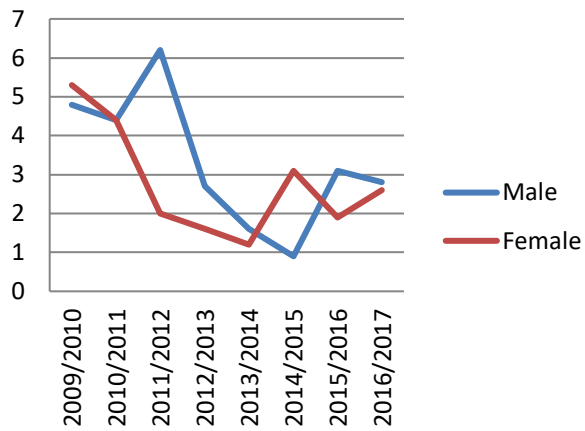
	A* (%)		A (%)		B (%)		C (%)		D (%)		E (%)	
	M	F	M	F	M	F	M	F	M	F	M	F
2016/2017	2.8	2.6	11.5	23.3	31.3	37	38.7	25.6	9.8	8.9	3.5	1.1
2015/2016	3.1	1.9	15.3	19.5	30.9	38.1	41.3	31.5	7.7	7.1	0.7	0.5
2014/2015	0.9	3.1	11.9	19.7	30.3	36.7	41.9	32.4	12.5	6.6	1.6	1.1
2013/2014	1.6	1.2	16	16.2	36.3	37.6	36.3	33.4	8.8	6.2	1	0
2012/2013	2.7	1.6	14.7	15.6	36.1	35.4	36.1	37.5	8.7	8.9	0.5	0.5
2011/2012	6.2	2	12.7	13.7	30	42.3	33.8	31	15.1	8.3	1.9	1.9
2010/2011	4.4	4.4	11.6	18.6	33.6	28.4	39.6	31.7	9.2	12	0.4	2.7
2009/2010	4.8	5.3	10.7	13.1	33.3	35.8	38.6	35.3	10.2	8.4	1.9	0.5
2008/2009	-	-	15.9	19	36.4	33.4	30.8	33.3	14.3	8.7	1.1	2.4
2007/2008	-	-	26.3	13.8	28.4	36.7	28.5	35.7	11.7	10.1	2.9	1.9

The line charts below show the comparison of grades at A-level for each grade for A* to E comparing male and female across the last ten year. It is interesting to note that at Grade A* while at the beginning of this period girls were achieving more A* Grades than boys (2009/2010) for the 4 years after that boys were achieving more A* grades than girls. In more recent years the gap has closed substantially. It should be noted that the A* grade at A-Level for Moving Image Arts was awarded first in 2009/2010 therefore this analysis is over 8 years.

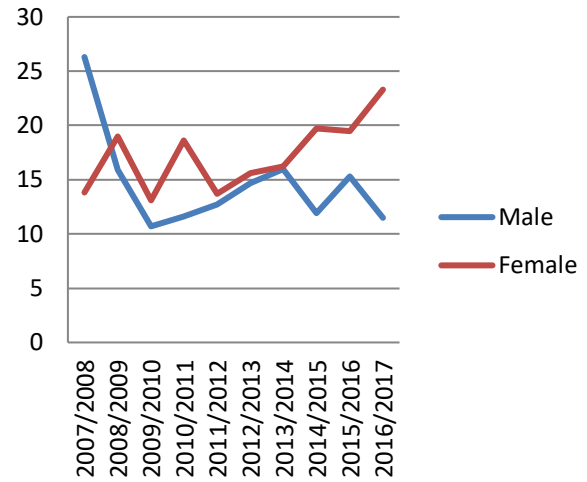
At Grade A, with the exception of the year 2007/2008, girls have consistently achieved more Grade A's than boys across this analysis. The gap in achieving Grade A is widest between the genders in the last year for which statistics are available (2016/2017).

Grade's B and C are consistently achieved by both boys and girls across the 10 years of the analysis but Grades D and E are more likely to be achieved by boys rather than girls.

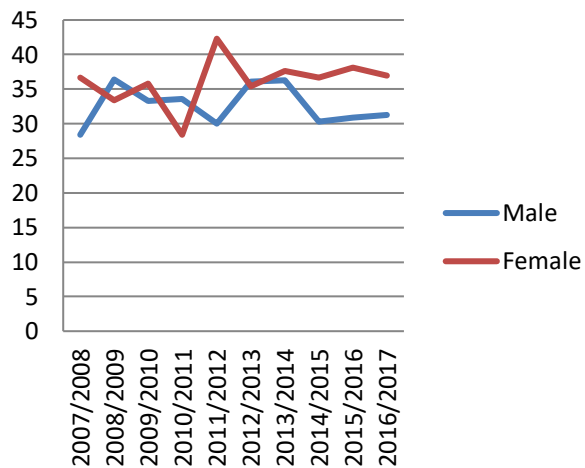
Comparison of Grade A*



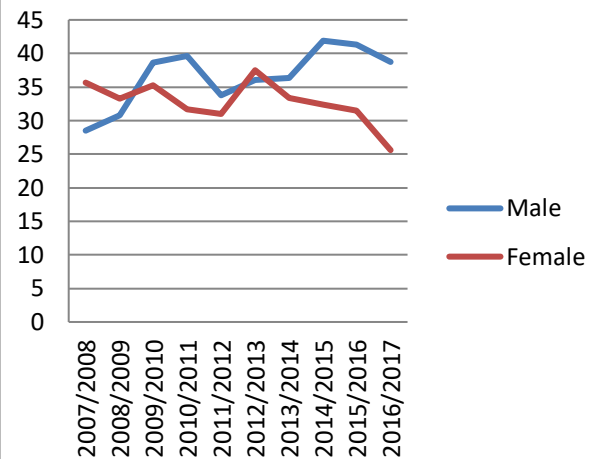
Comparison of Grade A



Comparison of Grade B

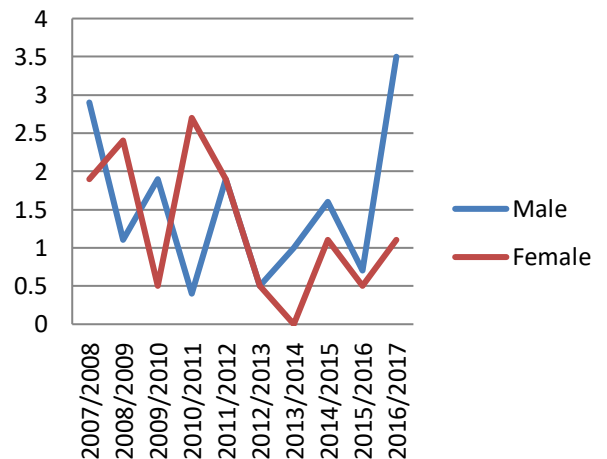


Comparison of Grade C



x

Comparison of Grade E



Degrees Undertaken by AS/A-Level Moving Image Arts Students

Data provided by Queens University of Belfast shows the degrees undertaken by students with AS-Level or A-Level Moving Image Arts from 2007/2008 to 2017/2018. The table below illustrates this information by year and by degree area. Where degrees are joint or major/minor, the predominant subject is reported as recorded by Queens University.

Degree / Year	2007/ 2008	2008/ 2009	2009/ 2010	2010/ 2011	2011/ 2012	2012/ 2013	2013/ 2014	2014/ 2015	2015/ 2016	2016/ 2017	2017/ 2018
BA Film Studies & Production	3	1	6	14	12	21	18	10	17	16	21
BA Broadcast Production (new)*	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	1
BA Film & Theatre Making (new)*	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	3
BA English / Creative Writing	5	-	3	2	5	8	4	4	7	6	6
BMus/Music Technology /Sonic Arts/Audio Prod/Sound Design	1	-	2	3	4	3	4	5	1	6	3
BA Drama	-	-	3	-	1	3	1	6	2	2	1
FD Creative Multimedia	2	-	2	1	1	-	-	-	-	-	-
BA History	-	-	1	2	2	4	1	1	3	1	4
BSc/BEng Computer Science	4	-	3	2	3	4	2	4	6	7	3
MEng Computer Games Development	-	-	1	-	1	-	1	1	-	-	-
BEng Civil Engineering	-	-	1	-	-	1	-	-	-	-	-
BEng/MEng Electrical Engineering	-	-	-	1	-	-	-	1	1	-	1
FD/MEng Mechanical Engineering	-	-	-	2	-	2	-	1	1	2	-
BEng/MEng Product Design	-	-	-	2	-	-	-	-	-	-	-

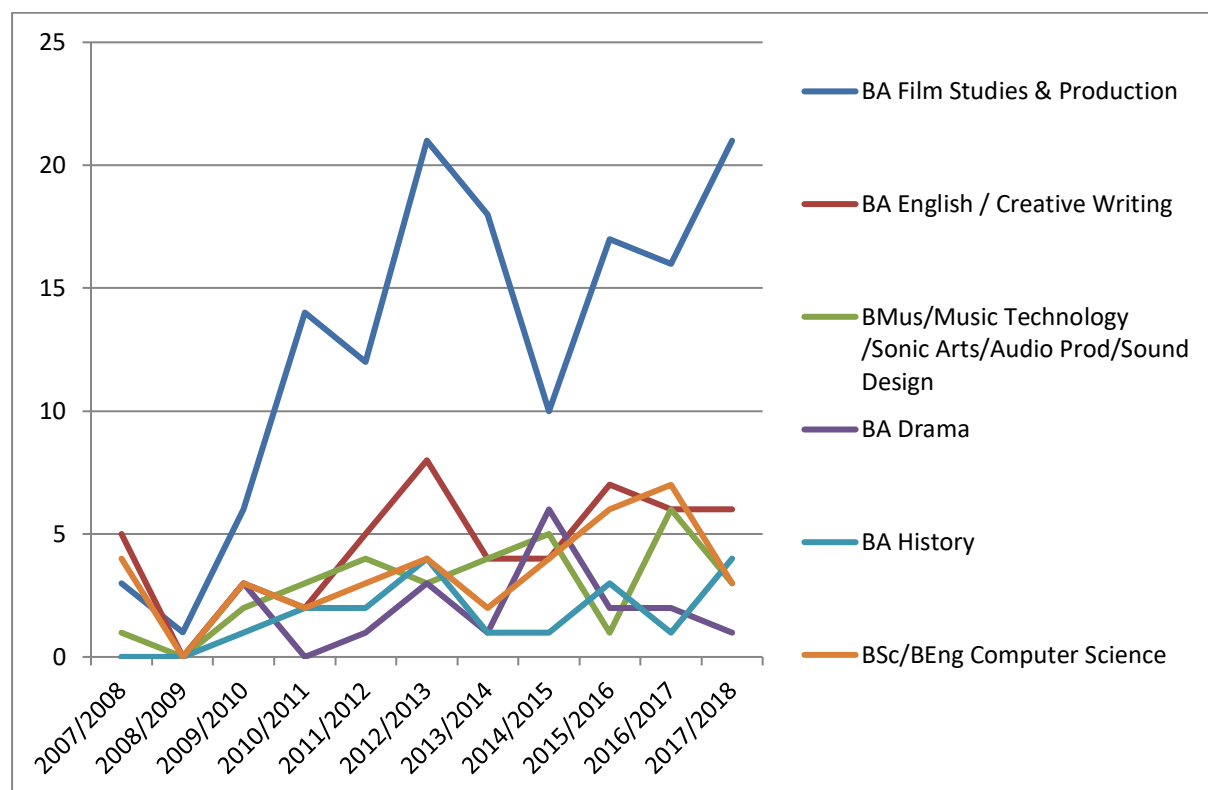
BSc Aerospace Engineering	-	-	-	-	-	1	-	-	-	-	-
BSc Physics	-	-	-	1	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
LLB Law	1	-	1	3	1	2	-	2	1	1	1
BA Theology	1	-	2	1	2	2	-	1	-	-	-
BA Philosophy	-	-	-	-	-	1	-	1	-	-	1
BSc Biochemistry	1	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
BSc Biological Sciences	-	-	1	-	-	1	-	-	-	-	1
BSc Human Biology	-	-	-	1	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
BSc Nursing / BSc Midwifery	-	-	1	-	2	1	-	2	3	2	2
MPharm Pharmacy	-	-	1	-	-	-	-	-	-	1	-
BSc Economics	1	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	1	1	-
BSc Accounting	-	-	-	1	-	1	-	-	-	-	-
BSc/MSci Mathematics	-	-	-	-	1	-	-	2	1	1	1
BA International Studies	-	-	3	-	-	-	1	-	-	-	-
BA Politics, Philosophy & Economics	-	-	1	-	-	-	-	2	-	1	-
BSc Architecture	-	-	1	2	-	-	-	4	1	-	2
BSc / MSci Archaeology/Paleoecology	-	-	1	1	2	1	-	1	-	-	1
BSc Business	-	-	3	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
BSc Geography	-	-	1	1	-	-	-	-	-	-	1
BA International Politics & Conflict Studies	-	-	-	1	-	-	-	-	1	-	-
BA French/Spanish	-	-	2	1	-	-	-	1	1	-	-
BA Irish	-	-	-	1	1	1	-	2	1	-	-

BSW Social Work	1	-	1	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
BA Sociology/Social Policy	-	-	1	-	-	1	-	-	-	-	-
BA Social Anthropology	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	1	1	-
BSc Psychology	-	-	-	1	4	1	1	5	4	3	-
BSc Criminology	-	-	-	-	1	1	1	1	1	-	2
BSc Zoology	-	-	-	1	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
BSc Business/Business Management	-	-	-	-	1	2	2	1	4	3	3
BA Ethnomusicology	-	-	-	-	1	-	-	-	-	-	-
BSc Environmental Planning	-	-	-	-	-	1	-	-	-	-	-
BSc Food Quality Safety	-	-	-	-	-	-	1	-	-	-	-
BSc Chemistry	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	1

*BA Broadcast Production and BA Film and Theatre Making are new degree programmes offered for first intake in 2017/2018.

The table above shows that there is a very wide range of degree programmes chosen by students with AS/A-Level Moving Image Arts. The degree with the most AS/A-Level Moving Image Arts students is the BA in Film and Production. Drama, English/Creative Writing and a range of Music degrees including the BMus, Music Technology, Sonic Arts, Audio Production and Sound Design also have larger number of Moving Image Arts students compared to other degrees. History and Computer Sciences are also popular degrees with students of Moving Image Arts. The range of degree programmes is surprising given that many are unconnected with the area of Moving Image Arts such as Nursing, Psychology or Engineering.

The line graph below shows the top six degree courses taking by students with AS/A-Level Moving Image Arts at Queens University over the last ten years. It is clear that the BA Film Studies and Production degree has the most students with AS/A-Level Moving Image Arts. It is interesting to note that a drop in numbers taking BA Film Studies and Production in 2014/2015 coincides with an increase in students taking BA Drama.



Data provided by Ulster University shows the degrees undertaken by students with AS-Level or A-Level Moving Image Arts from 2014/2015 to 2017/2018. The table below illustrates this information by year and by degree area. Ulster University stated that they had no students registered on degrees who had Moving Image Arts AS or A-Level for years 2009/2010, 2012/2013 and 2013/2014. In 2008/2009 less than 5 students* with Moving Image Arts were registered on one degree programme at Ulster University (BSc Hons Clinical Psychology). In 2010/2011 less than 5 students* were registered on one degree at Ulster University (BA Hons English with Psychology). In 2011/2012, less than 5 students* were registered on one degree at Ulster University (BSc Hons Property Investment Appraisal and Development).

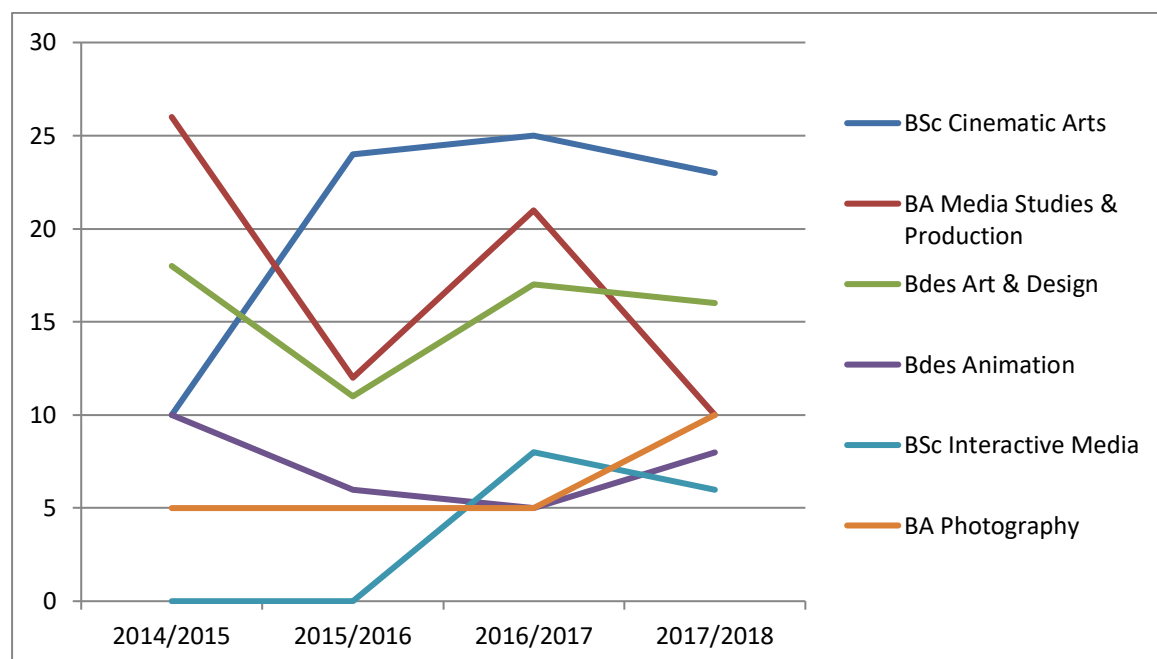
*Please note, specific numbers were not provided by Ulster University for courses with less than 5 students registered on a degree course.

Programme Title	2014/15	2015/16	2016/17	2017/18
BSc Hons Cinematic Arts FT	10	24	25	23
BA Hons Med Studies & Production FT	26	12	21	10
BDes Art & Design FYSD FT	18	11	17	16
BDes Hons Animation FT	10	6	5	8
BSc Hons Interactive Media FT	0	0	8	6
BA Hons Photography FT	<5	<5	<5	10
BSc Hons Inter Mmed Des FT	6	<5	<5	<5
BMus Hons Music FT	6	<5	5	<5
BA Hons Architecture FT	<5	<5		<5
BA Hons Contem Applied Arts FT		<5	<5	
BA Hons Drama FT		<5		<5
BA Hons Drama with Irish FT	<5			
BA Hons Drama with SociologyFT	<5			
BA Hons Engl & Media Stds FT				<5
BA Hons English FT	<5		<5	
BA Hons English with Psych FT	<5			
BA Hons Film Stds w English FT	<5			
BA Hons Film Stud w Photo FT	<5			
BA Hons Fine Art FT	<5	<5	<5	<5
BA Hons Hist. & Media Stds FT			<5	
BA Hons History FT	<5		<5	
BA Hons History with Edu FT				<5
BA Hons Interact Media Arts FT	<5	<5		
BA Hons Irish Lang & Lit FT	<5	<5		<5
BA Hons Irish with Mark FT	<5			
BA Hons Journal with Eng FT				<5
BA Hons Journal with Film FT	<5			
BA Hons Mda Stds w Engl FT			<5	<5
BA Hons Mda Stds w Film Std FT	<5			
BA Hons Mda Stds w Hist. FT			<5	
BA Hons Mda Stds w Mking FT	<5			
BA Hons Mda Stds with Bus FT		<5		
BA Hons Music with Psych FT	<5	<5		
BA Hons Spanish with Bus FT		<5		
BA Hons Textile, Des & Fash FT		<5	<5	<5
BDes Hons Des for Creat Pra FT	<5			
BDes Hons Design FT		5		
BDes Hons Graph Des& Illust FT	<5	<5	<5	5
BDes Hons Interact Design FT	<5		<5	<5
BDes Hons Interior Design FT	<5	<5		
BEng Hons Clean Technol FT		<5		
BEng Hons Comp Games Dev FT		<5	<5	
BEng Hons Computer Engin FT	<5			
BEng Hons Eng. Mngt FT			<5	
BEng Hons Mech & Manuf Eng FT			<5	
BEng Hons Mech. Engin FT	<5			
BEng Hons Mechatronic Eng FT			<5	
BEng Hons Software Engn FT	<5	<5	<5	<5

BSc Hons Account & Marketing FT			<5	
BSc Hons Account (Pathways) FT				<5
BSc Hons Advert with Comput FT				<5
BSc Hons Advertising FT	<5			
BSc Hons Arch Tech& Mgt FT	<5			<5
BSc Hons Building Survey FT	<5			
BSc Hons Bus Stds w Advert FT	<5			
BSc Hons Bus Stds with Opts FT			<5	<5
BSc Hons Bus with Computing FT	<5			
BSc Hons Bus with Mkting FT		<5		
BSc Hons Business Info Syst FT	<5	<5	<5	
BSc Hons Business Managemnt FT	<5	<5		
BSc Hons Busn Econ w Mkting FT				<5
BSc Hons Busn Stds FT	<5			<5
BSc Hons Busn Stds w Comput FT		<5	<5	<5
BSc Hons Clin Phys FT				
BSc Hons ComAdvert&Mark+DPP FT	<5			<5
BSc Hons Comm Mangt& PR DPP FT		<5	<5	<5
BSc Hons Commun with Advert FT	<5			
BSc Hons Comp Science FT	<5	<5	<5	<5
BSc Hons Comp Gam,Mod&AnimatFT	<5			
BSc Hons Comp Game Dev FT	<5	<5		
BSc Hons Comp Inter Sys FT		<5		
BSc Hons Comp ScSwareSyDv FT				<5
BSc Hons Comp Technologies FT	<5	<5		<5
BSc Hons Computer Sc. FT	<5	<5	5	<5
BSc Hons Computing FT	<5	<5		
BSc Hons Computing with Edu FT		<5		
BSc Hons Const Eng& Mgt+DPP FT		<5	<5	<5
BSc Hons Creative Technolog FT	<5	<5	9	<5
BSc Hons Crimn&Crim Justice FT	<5		<5	
BSc Hons Culinary Arts Mgmt FT		<5		<5
BSc Hons Diag Radiog & Imag FT	<5			
BSc Hons Fin & Inv Mngt FT			<5	
BSc Hons Food&Nutrition FT				<5
BSc Hons Geography FT			<5	
BSc Hons Geography with Edu FT				<5
BSc Hons Hlth Sci Common Y1 FT		<5		
BSc Hons HR Mgmt and Mkting FT		<5		
BSc Hons Human Res Mgt FT			<5	<5
BSc Hons Inform TechnologiesFT		<5	<5	
BSc Hons Int Travel&Tourism FT	<5	<5	<5	
BSc Hons Internat Hosp Mgmt FT	<5	<5		<5
BSc Hons Leisure&Events Mgt FT	<5		<5	<5
BSc Hons Marketing FT	<5	5	5	<5
BSc Hons Nurs Mental Health FT	<5		<5	
BSc Hons Nursing Adult FT				<5
BSc Hons Occupat Therpy 3yr FT		<5	<5	
BSc Hons Politics FT	<5	<5		
BSc Hons Politics w Crimin FT	<5	<5		
BSc Hons Prop Inv Appr&Dev FT	<5			
BSc Hons Psychology FT	<5	<5	<5	<5
BSc Hons Qu Sur & Com Mgmt FT	<5			
BSc Hons Real Estate FT		<5		
BSc Hons Soc Pol w Sociol FT			<5	<5

BSc Hons Soc Policy w Crim FT			<5	
BSc Hons Social Work FT		<5		
BSc Hons Sociol w Irish FT		<5		
BSc Hons Sociology FT	<5			
BSc Hons Sociology w Crim FT		<5	<5	
BSc Hons Sp&Exer Sc DPP FT			<5	<5
BSc Hons Sports Tech FT	<5			
BSc Hons Stratif Medicine FT				<5
BSc Hons Tech w Design FT			<5	
BScHonsTherap Comm&Couns StdFT			<5	<5
LLB Hons Law with Politics FT		<5		
MEng Mechatronic Engin FT				<5
MSci Plan & Property Devl FT		<5		

Similarly to Queens University, the data provided by Ulster University shows that Moving Image Arts students undertake a wide range of degrees. The degree with the most Moving Image Arts students at Ulster University is BSc Cinematic Arts. The top six degrees chosen by the largest numbers of Moving Image Arts students is shown in the line graph below for the last four academic years as provided by Ulster University.



Strand 2: Findings from Survey

Overall, the questionnaires were completed by 172 respondents. The 'public' version of the questionnaire was completed by 123 respondents and the 'student only' version of the questionnaire was completed by 49 respondents. For the purposes of this report, the analysis of the questionnaires has been combined where appropriate.

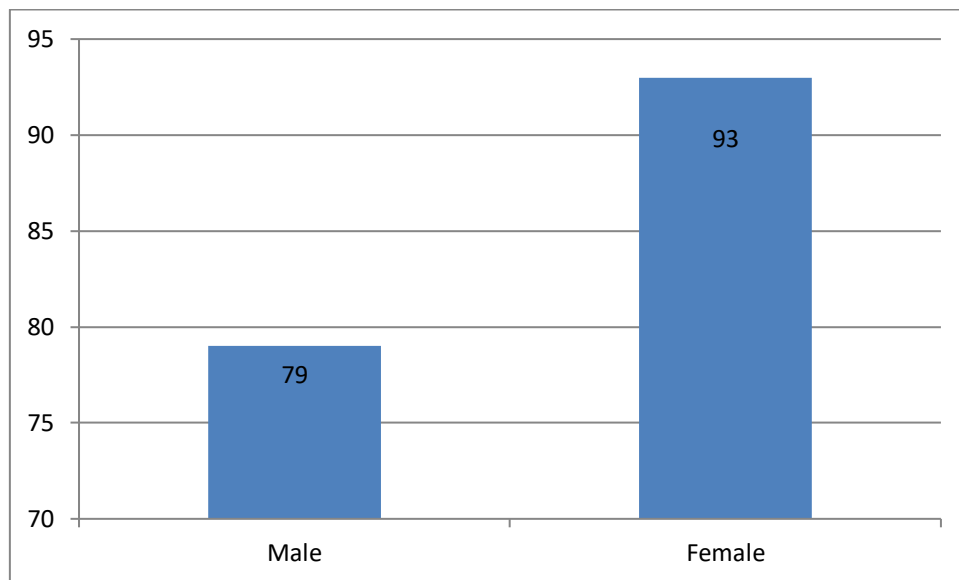
Age Profile

The youngest respondent was 16 years of age and the oldest was 40 years of age. The age profile of respondents is shown in the table below.

Age of respondent	Number of respondents
16 years	2
17 years	7
18 years	13
19 years	24
20 years	24
21 years	31
22 years	16
23 years	5
24 years	8
25 years	13
26 years	10
27 years	6
28 years	5
29 years	2
30 years	3
32 years	1
34 years	1
38 years	1
40 years	1

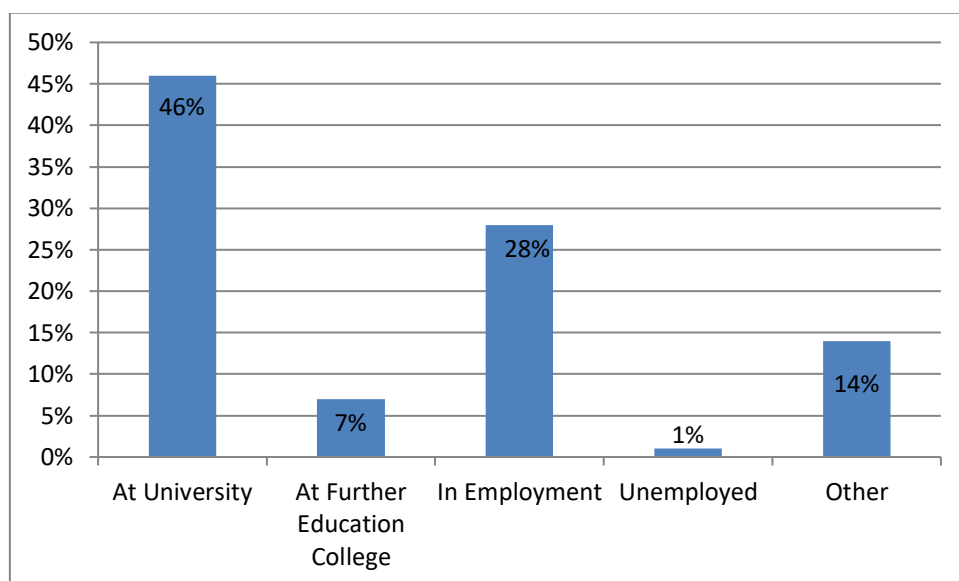
Gender Profile of Respondents

Overall 79 respondents were male and 93 were female. This equates to 46% of the sample being male and 54% being female. The chart below illustrates this breakdown.



Current Employment Status

The chart and table below shows the employment status of the sample overall.



	Number of respondents	Percentage of Sample
At University	79	46%
At Further Education College	13	7%
In Employment	48	28%
Unemployed	2	1%
Other	24	14%

The other category includes respondents who are at school or who are working part-time and studying.

Student Degree Courses

Those respondents who identified themselves as “At University” or “At Further Education College” were asked which degree course or course at college that they were studying.

Responses are tabulated below:

Degree	Number
Film Studies and Production	26
Cinematic Arts	15
Media Studies and Production	8
Interactive Media	6
Animation	4
Film and Theatre Production	4
Moving Image Arts	4
Drama	3
Film and Television Production	3
Photography with Media, Photography or Photography with Video	3
Broadcast Production	2
Accounting and Management	1
Broadcast Literacy	1
BTEC Level 3 Extended Diploma in TV and Film	1

Communication, Media and Advertising	1
Creative Media Production	1
Electrical and Electronic Engineering	1
Film and Video Production Technology	1
International Politics and Conflict Studies	1
Law	1
Media Production HND	1
Music Technology and Sonic Arts	1
Programming and Web Design	1
Theology	1

- 89% of respondents currently at University or Further Education College stated that they found Moving Image Arts AS/A-Level useful for their degree course.
- 91% of respondents at University or Further Education College felt that AS/A-Level Moving Image Arts had helped them with their degree course to date.

Reasons given as to how AS/A-Level Moving Image Arts had helped with their degree course to date mainly centred around the provision of basic skills in film, editing, production and terminology. Some quotations are presented below to illustrate the types of responses:

"It gave me experience in practical and film theory"

"I came to my university degree already having a basic understanding of the area"

"Knowledge about theory and practical aspects of filmmaking, as well as design and visual impact on how I design my pre-production, the aesthetic of my film work and the overall level of production"

"It has provided me with entry level skills to expand on whilst studying my course at university"

"Moving Image Arts helped develop my understanding of film language and my own filmmaking experience which has been very useful when it came to producing films for my university degree"

“Moving Image Arts set me up for the majority of what I was taught in my first two years of university.....with regards to film theory, I cannot stress enough what I learnt in Moving Image Arts largely overlapped with the contents of my University course”

“It gave me the basic understanding in film terminology that I needed, taught me pre-production, filming, editing techniques and also evaluation skills that are all crucial for filmmaking and film analysis both professionally and personally. These all gave me a massive head start for both studying film at University as well as being able to make and critique film in my own time in hope of someday working in the industry”

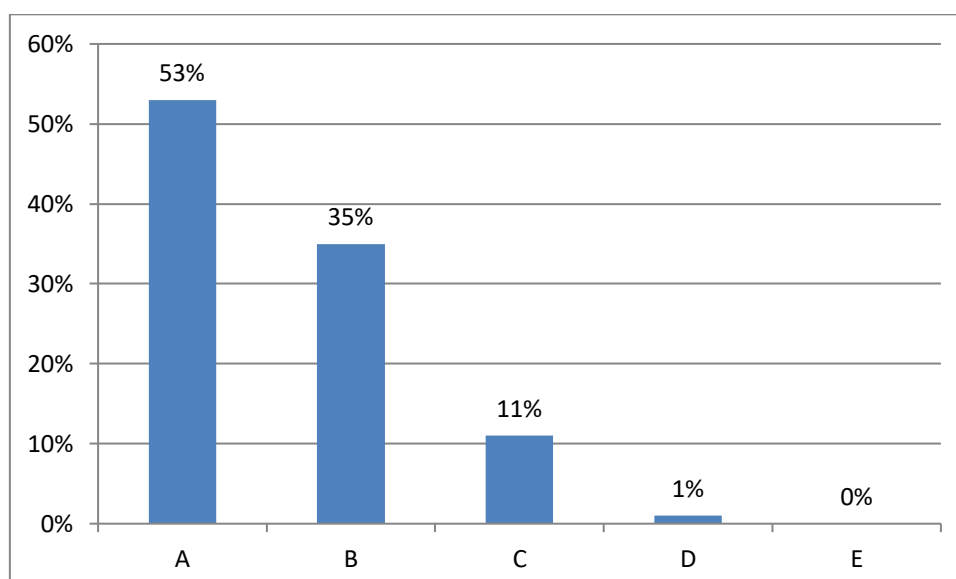
AS or A-Level Moving Image Arts

The Table below shows the numbers and percentages of respondents who undertook AS or A-Level Moving Image Arts. Some respondents did not complete the question (n=31).

	Number	Percentage
AS Level	21	15%
A Level	120	85%
Total	141	100%

Grades Achieved

The chart below shows the grades achieved by the respondents for AS/A-Level Moving Image Arts.



GCSE Moving Image Arts

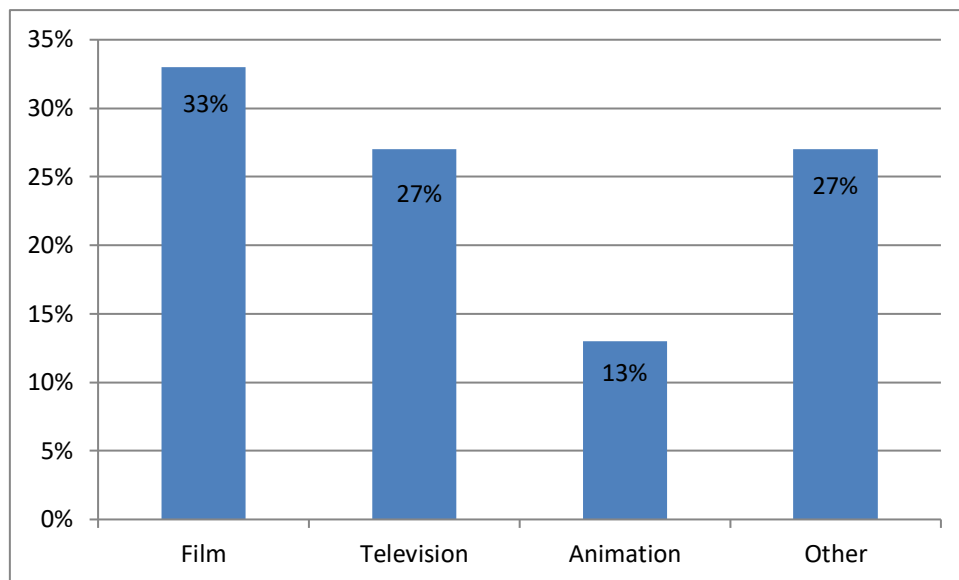
Thirty-six respondents stated that they had undertaken GCSE Moving Image Arts (21% of overall sample). The table below shows the grades achieved by those 36 respondents.

	Number	Percentage
A*	10	28%
A	13	36%
B	8	22%
C	0	0
D	0	0
E	0	0
F	0	0
G	0	0
Don't remember	5	14%
Total	36	100%

Respondents Currently in Employment

- Forty-eight respondents stated that they were currently in employment (28% of the total sample).
- Of these respondents 93% stated that they also attended University.
- The majority of degrees undertaken related to Moving Image Arts and the Creative Industries including Film Studies, Media Studies, Drama, Animation and Cinematic Arts.
- When asked if their current job was related to Moving Image Arts, 67% stated that it was and 33% stated that it was not.

The bar chart below shows the breakdown of that 67% who stated that their job was related to Moving Image Arts into several categories. The 'other' category included 'self-employed' and 'freelance'.



Of those respondents currently working in areas related to Moving Image Arts, 90% stated that they found the AS/A-Level useful in relation to their job. Respondents were asked "In what ways do you find AS/A Level Moving Image Arts useful in your career. Many responses related to Moving Image Arts providing the basic skills needed for their career.

The quotes below illustrate this:

"Learnt basic skills of camera work and editing before entering the professional world"

"It provided the fundamentals of how film/TV is produced"

"Moving Image Arts taught me the basics that I needed for my job and the basics and more for continuing in third level education and career"

The table below shows the job titles given by these respondents.

Job Title	Number		Job Title	Number
Producer	3		Assistant Director	1
Marketing	2		Legal Secretary	1
Store Associate	1		Trainee Accountant	1
News Camera Operator	1		Actor	1
Learning Support Assistant	1		3D Visualiser/Animator	1
Sales Assistant	1		Customer Service Advisor	1
VFX Artist	1		Writer/Director	1
Videographer	1		Administrative Officer	1
Filmmaker	1		Stockroom Assistant	1
Junior Production Manager	1		Teacher	1
Camera Assistant	1		Animation Production Co-ordinator	1
Gallery Assistant	1		Secretary	1
Previz Artist/Animator	1		Trainee Assistant Producer	1
Assistant Producer	1		Sales and Marketing Manager	1
Assistant Co-ordinator	1		Generalist	1
Moving Image Technician	1		Media Manager	1
Camera Technician	1		Trainee Assistant Director/Junior Editor	1
Production Assistant	1		Grip	1

Other comments referred to opening up a career in the creative arts as a possibility:

“Moving Image Arts A-Level was the exact qualification that I needed to qualify to study a degree in Film Production which has allowed me to work full time in TV/Film. Without it, I doubt I’d be where I am now”

“It helped me discover my love of film and pointed me in the right direction to pursue a career in film”

“Moving Image Arts came along when I was a bit lost in school. I knew I loved film but I wasn’t sure what I was going to do in the future. Moving Image Arts cemented my love for cinema and what I wanted to do in the future. It gave me a new confidence in my abilities and definitely helped shape my voice in cinema”

Reasons for Choosing AS or A-Level Moving Image Arts

Respondents were asked 'Why did you choose Moving Image Arts for AS or A-Level?'

The open-ended responses were analysed into several categories and examples of the responses used to illustrate as below:

Enjoyed it at GCSE

"I had done it at GCSE and I knew I wanted a career in the TV/Film industry. I loved the practical aspect of the subject as I'm very creative but am not that talented in typical art. I love making films and documentaries"

"Having studied it at GCSE, I very much enjoyed the subject and I wished to carry it on. It was the subject I performed best at as well as having the most passion in"

"I found the subject interesting as I enjoyed it at GCSE level. I also aspired to enter the field of animation at the time so I thought I should gain relevant experience with the production process since the option was available to do so"

Love for film

"Film had always been a great passion of mine and I wanted to learn more about what I love, while also considering having a career in the field"

"Deep rooted interest in film and media"

"I enjoyed movies and knew I wanted to pursue a creative career"

"My passion for film had also bloomed during my GCSE years so I hopped at the chance to do it for A-Level"

Wanted to work in the Creative Industries

"I was interested in studying film and making films and learning about the creative process. I also wanted to work in the film making industry"

"It seemed like the perfect course for me to enhance my skills and understanding and be the most likely course to get me the job I wanted"

"I knew I wanted to pursue a career in film production and television. The course allowed me the freedom to be creative and create my own projects from start to finish and I felt such an accomplishment as a creative doing so"

"I wanted to make films and make a career out of it"

Enjoyable Aspects of AS and A-Level Moving Image Arts

Respondents were asked what aspects of the Moving Image Arts AS/A-Level that they enjoyed. The open-ended responses were analysed into several categories and examples of the responses used to illustrate as below:

All Aspects were enjoyable

"All aspects, it's a well-balanced course in terms of practical and theoretical"

"Everything, both the practical and the theory side was very interesting"

"Everything to be honest. It was fantastic, and the subject I looked forward to the most. It began an interest in the art of film making as well as pushing me down a different career path"

Creativity

"The freedom of creativity that it gave me"

"The independence and the creativity"

"Being creative. Looking at the world in a different light. Meeting likeminded people. Becoming more involved with other film related ventures...."

"I enjoyed the creative process of adapting ideas to the screen, all the while finding unique and interesting ways to solve problems on set with a new camera angle, or in post-production with an alternate edit"

"The creative freedom it allowed me..."

Autonomy/Freedom

"The freedom of being able to tell any story I wanted. The time to think about shot types, how to use a camera to visualise what I had in my head..."

"Being able to make our own films through the influence of other filmmakers work"

"I enjoyed the freedom of choosing the content of my projects. Much to my surprise, I was able to freely explore the works of Quentin Tarantino, a director that I had wanted to look into for a while"

"Being able to express my ideas and voice. Making short films really let me understand what I feel is important to talk about today and express what I felt was missing in media. Not only this but the independence. It was very refreshing to be trusted with my work...."

Practical Aspects

"I very much enjoyed the practical aspects of Moving Image Arts. Writing, directing and editing my films gave me so much pride"

"The practical element, how hands on it was and how much space there is to give a creative input into my work"

"The practical film and animation projects"

"The practical parts, editing, filming, casting...."

Less Enjoyable Aspects of AS/A-Level Moving Image Arts

Respondents were asked what aspects of the Moving Image Arts AS/A-Level that they did not enjoy. The open-ended responses were analysed into several categories and examples of the responses used to illustrate as below:

Teachers not trained in Moving Image Arts

"My teacher was not as informed as I would have liked, as I believe I was the first year to complete the A-Level. I believe this is why I was given so much freedom as my background and knowledge was often more than the teachers"

"The teaching style was different as the teachers came in from a local college, we were not prepared for this laissez-faire type of teaching"

"The teachers were either music or art teachers and didn't seem to have much knowledge of film so we taught ourselves a lot..."

".....the teachers, we had four of them, were not very good and didn't really seem to understand it themselves, as if the school just picked any teacher to teach it..."

Information on jobs/opportunities in the industry

"They do not stress how to make a career for yourself. There was no educated advice as to what you can do and how you can make a living being a crew member"

"Being lead to believe that there would actually be prosperous careers within the creative sector"

"Lack of support to branch into a career with the qualification"

Theory/History Aspects

"Some of the history I feel is unnecessary. It doesn't help in filmmaking nowadays..."

"I think the theoretical side was pointless....it practically taught me nothing. I did Film Studies at [university name] and I loved and excelled in the academic part of the course. It was something that Moving Image Arts didn't do properly. I think if it needs a theoretical side, it needs to include teaching outside of contemporary Hollywood film and introduce films that challenge students and make them think, that is what [university name] did right"

"The theory exam was a struggle with the time pressure"

"Too much theory, not enough practical"

"Some of the theory was difficult and should have been moved to the end of the year"

Lack of equipment/poor quality of equipment/lack of funding

"The equipment in my school wasn't very good which gave wealthier students a big advantage as they had access to software, cameras etc."

"My only complaint is the lack of funding.... Syphon money out of art classes and into Moving Image Arts if you have to. Just get more money into it. And get more money to promote it"

"....the computers always crashed"

"....the equipment was really disappointing and the course was severely underfunded"

"Limited resources"

"The course would have benefitted from a greater range of equipment such as lighting, DSLR cameras, boom mics and green screens"

Amount of time/effort required for pre/post production

"The amount of paperwork and cataloguing that was put into pre/post-production files that were given little or no credit. I think 10% of your overall mark, yet it was very time consuming. I wish it had been given more of a weight in your grade if you had to spend so much time and tick so much criteria in order to gain these few marks"

"The large amount of pre-production required..."

No teaching on scriptwriting

"One thing I didn't like and that I still do not like (as I work within the subject now) is that there is no focus on how to write a script or screenplay"

No teamwork/collaboration

"....there is no real enforcement of proper planning for shoots or encouragement of teamwork. Filmmaking is a team effort and people need to learn how to work together and I think this is a missed opportunity for this to happen at an earlier stage. This is a missed opportunity for the course and one that is vital for the film industry and one that should be taught before university level"

"It's always hard to find people to be in your production.....perhaps a collaborative part of the course/extra credit type thing with a drama class would be useful"

"Very few in my class, unable to collaborate properly"

"I didn't always enjoy working individually because I think learning to work in a team is important to filmmaking and it would have been a benefit for everyone to work on something together instead of always working alone"

"Teamwork was not encouraged which made it even more difficult...."

No work experience

"I also wish we had got to go out more and get experience on sets.... I think that Moving Image Arts students should be allowed to get more work experience as in the industry it's about who you know more than what you know"

Recommending AS/A-Level Moving Image Arts to Others

Overall, 94% of the sample stated that they would recommend AS/A-Level Moving Image Arts to others.

Reasons for recommending Moving Image Arts to others included:

- Interesting and fun subject
- Allows for creative expression
- Prepares you for creative university degrees and further education courses
- Provides the basic skills for filmmaking
- You get to make your own film
- A chance to explore your creativity
- Prepares you for a career in film or television
- Broadens your knowledge of film
- Alternative to typical academic curriculum
- Very rewarding
- Builds confidence

Respondents were asked what type of person that they would recommend AS/A-Level Moving Image Arts to. Responses included:

- Creative people
- People interested in film, television, media and social media
- People with vision
- Artistic people
- Everyone!
- People interested in storytelling
- People interested in technology and equipment
- People who think outside the box!

The small percentage of respondents (6%) who indicated that they would not recommended AS/A-Level Moving Image Arts were asked to expand on why this was. A very small number of responses were made as below:

"Absolute lack of career opportunities. Unless you know people in the industry, your qualifications are pointless"

"Lack of support to help utilise the qualification to gain employment in the media and filmmaking sector in Northern Ireland"

"I found that almost all of the creative and technical skill/knowledge I have was self-taught rather than learned through Moving Image Arts. I have found that in the field of film, potential employers care much less about qualifications and grades than they do about real-world experience and a good show reel..."

"The quality of teaching was poor and the course didn't allow for teamwork"

"Nothing you can't learn or complete at GCSE level. It's good for fun or for a bit of relief from other subjects, however useless for anything in the real world. Experience is key in the industry"

Level of Satisfaction with AS/A-Level Moving Image Arts

The level of satisfaction with AS/A-Level Moving Image Arts overall was high, averaging at 8 out of 10. Some quotations from responses to expand on the level of satisfaction are outlined below:

"I thoroughly enjoyed the course and what it offered me. I had never come across anything like this in school before"

"I felt like it allowed me to open up more and study what I truly loved at an academic level"

"The sheer enjoyment I had with the course was only hindered by the limited amount of filmmaking equipment our school had at its disposal. Otherwise every aspect of learning the methods of film production proved both engaging and informative"

"Creativity was respected and nourished"

"It was my favourite subject at school and I thoroughly enjoyed it"

"The course itself and the enjoyment and the fulfilment it gave me were invaluable"

"It was one of the most enjoyable subjects in my school. The teaching was great and easy to understand, the practical work was a joy to take part in and learning more about how the camera worked and how to film more practically really helped my skills set"

"My favourite class and I looked forward to it every week"

"If I hadn't done the Moving Image Arts course, I would not be as technically competent as I am"

Influence on Choice of Course at University or Further Education College

Respondents who indicated that they had attended University or Further Education College either in the past or currently were asked if AS/A-Level Moving Image Arts had influenced their choice of course at University or Further Education College. Overall 101 respondents answered this question.

- 89% stated that Moving Image Arts did influence their choice of course.
- 10% stated that it did not influence their choice of course.
- 1% stated that they did not know.

Of the 89% who stated that it did influence their choice of course, the ways in which it influenced them are summarised below:

- Made me sure that it was what I wanted to pursue at University and future career
- Gave me insight into what TV and film production was like
- Reinforced that this was what I wanted to do
- Changed my future direction as I enjoyed the A-Level so much
- Motivated me to pursue filmmaking through University and in the future
- If I had not done Moving Image Arts at A-Level, I would not have considered applying to do film at University

Influence on Choice of Current or Future Career

Respondents were asked if AS/A-Level Moving Image Arts had influenced their career / future career aspirations.

- 90% stated that it had influenced their career / future career aspirations
- 5% stated that it had not influenced their career / future career aspirations
- 5% stated that they did not know

The 90% of respondents who stated that it had influenced their career / future career aspirations, were asked in what ways that they felt it had influenced it. Responses have been categorised into themes below and quotations used to illustrate each theme:

Inspiration

"It inspired me to try and pursue a career in filmmaking"

"It showed me that I love to edit, I wouldn't have tried it before otherwise"

"Moving Image Arts helped me discover where my strengths lay and has also fuelled my ambition to become a film director"

Variety of roles

"The abundance of different types of jobs, a lot of which are a variation on what I had been doing at a higher level"

"It has given me exposure and beginning of education of the many roles one can have in filmmaking"

Confirmation

"It solidified how I felt about filmmaking and showed me how much I enjoyed it..."

"I don't know if 'influenced my choice' is the right phrase so much as 'solidified my choice', I would have chosen a career in film anyway..."

"Thanks to Moving Image Arts, I intend to pursue a career in the film industry, wherever that may take me"

"It made me realise that I have a natural talent in filmmaking, so I should make a career out of it"

Clearer direction

"It steered me in the right direction for where I want to go"

"It showed me a clearer path into which design route I wanted to take as at the time I was leaning more towards graphic design but Moving Image Arts shifted my interest towards a more practical route into animation"

"I decided to apply for Film with Hispanic Studies [degree] as before Moving Image Arts; I didn't know that you could do a course in Film"

"It changed my mind from a career in teaching and academia to actual film production and editing"

"It helped me get my hands dirty and realise how difficult it is to make a film. This threw me into a raging fit of determination to get better and love the craft"

"It showed me that this career was an option"

"I found something that I loved doing. I'd never experienced that in school before and I know it was something I would love to do given the opportunity"

While the majority of responses related to positive influences on their choice of career, a few responses related to negative influence and moving away from a career in the creative industries as a result. The quotation below illustrates this:

"I would have liked to work in the local film industry; however, after completing the Trainee AD Course and seeing the reality of the industry, including the absolute lack of professionalism of staff at wrap parties (especially older men) and the lack of job progression, I have avoided this career like the plague".

Students completing the 'student only' questionnaire were asked 'what career are you hoping to pursue after your University degree course?' Responses are summarised below:

- Film industry (82%)
- Undecided (3%)
- Acting (3%)
- Media Marketing (3%)
- Photography (3%)

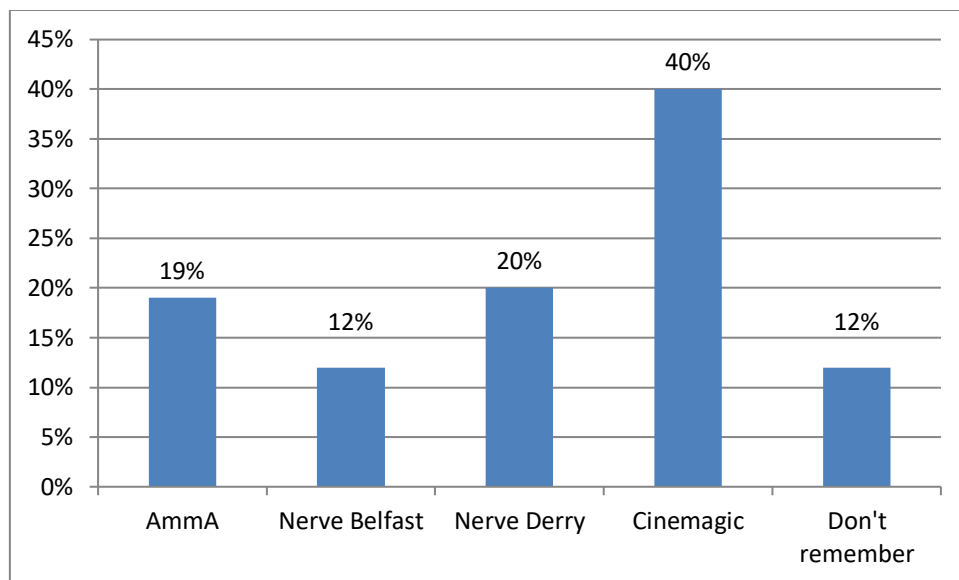
- Advertising (3%)
- Further Study (3%)

British Film Institute (BFI) Academies

Respondents were asked if they had attended any workshops or short courses at a BFI Academy during their AS/A-Level Moving Image Arts.

- 25% stated that they had attended a BFI Academy course or workshop
- 75% stated that they had not attended any BFI Academy courses or workshops

Of those respondents who did attend, they were asked which BFI Academy they attended. The bar chart below illustrates their responses.



Respondents were asked if they found the BFI Academy course or workshop helpful.

- 72% stated that they found the course/workshop 'very helpful'
- 28% stated that they found the course/workshop 'helpful'

In an open ended question, respondents were asked what aspects of the course or workshop that they find helpful. Responses included:

- Editing
- Getting out of the classroom

- Working with industry professionals
- Being able to make own films and create film sets
- Networking experiences
- Working with industry equipment
- Inspirational filmmakers

The quotations below illustrate some of these points:

“Every single day I learned something new. There was never a day I wasn’t kept on my toes and being given exactly what I wanted from the experience. Being able to create our own films and create a film set was fantastic!”

“Meeting industry professionals such as Tim Loane and Terry Bamber. Getting the chance to go to Los Angeles. Getting onto the BFI Craft Residential in the NFTS and making a film which went on to win three awards at film festivals. Networking experiences. Meeting like-minded individuals”

“Making our own film with director Michael Lennox was a great experience on the dynamic process of making films and the difficulties and challenges of my experiences”

Respondents were also asked if they had any suggestions for improvements to the BFI Academies courses or workshops. While the majority of respondents stated that they had no suggestions for improvements, a small number of respondents did make some suggestions as outlined below:

“More remote workshops, perhaps coming to Moving Image Arts school clusters”

“Elitism is a problem in Cinemagic especially. Always choosing the same students, or so it seems anyway”

“Let the young filmmakers be more hands on”

“Fund them! Such a great way to get young people involved in film! Letting them see the opportunities that are offered to them....”

“I wish the work produced could be linked into the coursework for Moving Image Arts better”

“A section on animation would be beneficial”

Respondents were asked if their involvement with the BFI Academies influenced their choice of University or Further Education College course:

- 56% stated that it did influence their choice of course
- 32% stated that it did not influence their choice of course
- 12% stated that they did not know

Those respondents who felt that it had influenced their choice of course stated that it

- Reaffirmed their choices
- Made them focus more on specific areas that they wanted to pursue
- Sparked a passion about film
- Provided a qualification

When asked if their involvement with the BFI Academies influences their choice of career or future career,

- 71% stated that it had influences their career/future career choice
- 18% stated that it had not influenced their choice about career/future career
- 12% stated that they did not know

Further Comments

Respondents were given an opportunity at the end of the questionnaire to add any further comments that they wished to make. These open-ended comments have been analysed into themes, some of which are similar to others throughout the previous analysis, and examples are presented below:

Work experience

"At A-Level stage I feel like more effort should be made in promoting work experience so that students can see the field outside the classroom. Although this may have not been the case for some schools, I felt like it was something I missed out on early on"

"...I had heard of Cinemagic but had no idea of how to get involved with it. We had also been promised a trip to UTV studios but nothing ever came of it..."

"Would like to have had some workshop or some work experience organised by the school"

Teamwork

"Practical projects would be better in groups"

"Maybe make production a more collaborative effort"

Lack of funding

"I think Film and Television is a hugely important industry. I am really passionate about young people involved in Film. However, I feel that my experience with the course was a serious lack of funding and I often found it difficult when looking for a work placement as businesses in the industry were not aware of the course"

"Expand it, invest in it, make it last"

Teaching

"Hopefully now the course is taught by those better trained to teach it properly"

"The teachers make all the difference. I would hope and pray that all teachers are as dedicated as my teachers were"

"I wish our teacher had industry experience. I don't think he was the right person for the job"

"...I feel and know a lot of others would like it if the teachers across a lot of schools were properly qualified for the subject and not coming from maths or music without the proper knowledge..."

"I do believe that there should be Moving Image PGCE in Northern Ireland. In my current place of work, the teachers currently teaching the subject have no filmmaking experience at all and I find that I am often teaching them the finer points of filmmaking and editing.... I have seen media teachers, ICT teachers and English teachers all take Moving Image classes and not one of them have gone out themselves and know the true experience from beginning to end of making a short film. It should be filmmakers and people who know that experience to teach the next generation of possible filmmakers and unfortunately that opportunity does not exist"

Realities of the Industry

"It's a fun course to do for kids, however teenagers need to be made fully aware of the realities of a career in this industry while studying the subject. How unlikely it will be that they will ever make enough money to survive from this skill set and the unsociable hours required if they are one of the lucky ones and actually get work...."

"....Experience is key in the industry.... Unless you are living in Belfast with connections, a job is scarce. Doing the A-level won't get you far"

Course Content

"Make it more challenging, If A Level kids are able to learn Physics, Maths to a high level, they should be able to learn camera settings, techniques, lighting set ups and fundamental basics of narrative structure"

"....I think it would be beneficial for anyone studying Moving Image Arts to learn more about how to work the technical side of the camera in order to produce shots to a higher standard..."

"This course is one of the best creative courses available to secondary school students in the UK. It must be nurtured and invested in to produce the next artists for a new generation"

Strand 3: Findings from Interviews with Academics

Research interviews were undertaken with six academics (lecturers and senior lecturers) across both Universities in Northern Ireland. All were currently involved in teaching in the Creative Arts and all were highly experienced in their own areas. Themes were developed from the interview transcripts and are presented below with direct quotations to illustrate the themes.

Level of Understanding

There was variation in the level of understanding among the academic sample with regards to how much they knew about AS/A-Level Moving Image Arts. Some participants knew a lot about the qualification and others knew very little.

"I would have quite an extensive knowledge of Moving Image Arts. I have been involved in advisory boards for the revalidation of Moving Image Arts with CCEA in the past. I was directly involved in discussions about the curriculum and how it should be developed and how it should be updated effectively, so I would have a good knowledge of CCEA and the subject area"

"At secondary level, my understanding is limited, at secondary level I would say, primarily I would say because I teach on an interactive media course and that's my background, interactive media which doesn't align too well at the moment to the Moving Image Arts so we would tend to focus on the course that I teach...."

"I did know quite a bit about it when it was first introduced because I went to some.... workshops and different things organised by CCEA and there were consultations that I went to at the time"

Areas of the Moving Image Arts Curriculum

Awareness of the area of the AS/A-Level Moving Image Arts curriculum was mixed among the participants. Some participants had a very good understanding of what AS/A-Level students were taught on the course and others did not have as clear an understanding. Most had some understanding of the practice that was taught on the course but some were unsure about what theory was being taught.

Moving Image Arts connecting to University Degree Programmes

Participants were asked how AS/A-Level Moving Image Arts connected to their own discipline or teaching area at University. All participants felt that it was connected to their University subject in various ways.

"...it is a subject that is closely related to the study of film as an art form and craft in relation to the Moving Image and there are a lot of parallels, so university for a lot of these students would be the next level, it would be seen as a continuation of Moving Image Arts at A level for many students.... It's very connected to film studies, in fact film studies is a continuation of what they will have started at school and for many students it seems this is native territory...."

"There are transferrable skills such as immediate knowledge of [Adobe] Premier, I don't have to teach it at all, they come prepared although there is a first year introduction to editing that does revisions, that's one major advantage. Two, they come with the knowledge of compositions somehow and the shot sizes, that's good..... on the other hand, I am thinking, they miss half of everything I would say, whether it is film history and theory or film making, they don't know it all. So that's why the transferrable skills end up around Week 6 in the first year, after that, everything is new to them..."

"Ok, so what we try to do is to try to connect it in first year and then drive away from it in second and third year.... [One of the modules] essentially its technology driven and its experimental film making, its 360, its drone, its take a piece of emerging technology and experiment with it and that means that they have to understand classic film making techniques to begin with so we draw on that curriculum to begin with. [Some of the modules] draw really heavily on some of the curriculum in Moving Image Arts and Media Studies which are two sort of separate entities"

"First of all screenwriting is quite relevant I believe because when you have students in the classroom who have had previous experience in coming with script ideas and who can actually develop a script, shooting a film, doesn't matter how long it was, it makes a lot of a difference. Paradoxically, I find more students in the second year that are really familiar with creative arts than an MA student for instance.... I believe that's the reason, the experience that they get in the secondary schools and for all their teaching instead its leaving, its more difficult to pinpoint, in a sense that, as you know, when talking about theories, sometimes I have students from joint with English and they bring a very different kind of skills and what you notice usually there more than the previous knowledge of Adobe, you can notice a very different sort of writing skills, more familiarity with different kinds of degrees"

"It certainly gives a familiarity with basic technical terms and practices. I think it also offers them some kind of cultural and historical background.... I think it gives them a fairly good broad introduction to moving image culture....as well as some experience of practical film making..."

Some participants also outlined challenges for AS/A-Level Moving Image Arts moving forward as the quotations below illustrate:

"....it pretty much ignores digital media in a way that I think is not helpful so I think that one of the big challenges for Moving Image Arts, as it is for Film Studies as a discipline, is to start to embrace digital technology and new and creative and immersive formats, multi-platform delivery, so even film makers now have to make content that goes along with their films, it's no longer enough just to hand over a linear based film, you must develop on a multi-platform way, apps, websites, background, behind the scenes footage, engagement in other ways, social media campaigns and so on.... and of course even the hype that surrounds actors and the machine that works in selling the product is very much about content driven on social media platforms. At the moment, none of this is really addressed in A-level Moving Image Arts and I think this is an area where they either need to develop another A level or.... I suspect it could be handled very neatly within the existing Moving Image Arts A-level"

"I think that there is a danger that Moving Image Arts is going to be left behind the industry, left behind the developments in the Creative Industries, particularly here in Northern Ireland where we are trying to push at the cutting edge of the Creative Industries and I think that at the moment it is a fantastic A-level that allows and motivates young people into appreciating the craft that is production, that is film making, that is the art form of film and it inspires that to get involved with media production and production across the board which is very, very beneficial first of all as a feeder for our degree programmes but also as a very early starter for young people who are interested in working in the Creative Industry Sector, however, I think that more could be done to look and explore other aspects of the area"

Preference and Pre-Requisite

No preference is given to students with A-Level Moving Image Arts on application to either University in Northern Ireland and the A-Level is not a pre-requisite for any Creative Arts courses at either University.

Benefits to having AS/A-Level Moving Image Arts

Participants were asked what the benefits are for a student with AS/A-Level Moving Image Arts coming to University to a Creative Arts degree programme. All academics felt that there were benefits, mainly in the first year of a degree programme on certain Creative Arts courses. The following quotations illustrate this:

“So it gives them a grounding, however basic it is, but it gives them a grounding in genre, in thinking about film in a critical and theoretical way, reflecting on the history, a lot of Moving Image Arts is history based, but it does give students a context and a basis to step off from when they arrive at university rather than coming into a very new subject that has no, that they have no background in at all. And so, they get a good understanding of genre, they get good exposure to film, they get to watch, they get to view, they get to make, also, film”

“They know that it involves a lot of pre-production planning and during the shoot a lot of dedication and long hours... Those students who have taken Moving Image Arts previously, have a prior understanding of the difficulties and the commitment and the pleasure of creation, that’s why it makes a perfect match...”

“Our first year is very technical and about software delivery and skills development so we try to level off all the skills in first year to build to conceptual skills in second year so actually students sometimes come in and they do very well in first year and then their grades go down in second year because the assessments are less formulaic and more creative brief driven. So students are very good when they come off Moving Image Arts at pre-production process and they have an understanding of the work flow and the pipeline that they have to follow or they have a rough understanding of it that we can build on....”

“So there is already a familiarity with some of the tools that we employ and also creates an expectation of what we can offer to them and to the development of their skills. Even when teaching something about theory or practical skills and screenwriting, there is a kind of familiarity, even to other things such as fragmentation, putting together a story, in terms of organising the visual, and actually organising the meaning, ok that is a good point now.... Some of the students I have noticed in past years are more and more aware of intrinsic quality of filmmaking”

“Anything that familiarises the students with film language, terms, concepts, basic technologies, visual culture in a broad sense..... those kinds of things are generally very useful”

“They have an understanding, when you talk about film language or narratives, if you are talking about narrative structures, it doesn’t matter what the genre is, documentary or drama or whatever, when you start speaking and using it, people who understand the terminology, they get it, because they have already done it”

Other points were made in response to this question about issues that were not of benefit to Moving Image Arts students coming to University Creative Arts degrees. This is illustrated in the following quotations:

"It's helpful, up to a point... We find that a lot of Moving Image Arts students come in with bad habits and inflated ideas about how capable they are with technology and using cameras and so on and some of that can take a little bit of time to undo in terms of, you know, formal film language, understanding continuity systems and so on.... they often come in with very prescribed ideas about film, they often come in with very naïve ideas, very basic story ideas, so sometimes that side of it is not particularly helpful depending on what school they have come through but definitely, in a wider context, it is great that they get exposure to film culture, to Moving Image Arts as an appreciation of an arts form before they arrive at university"

"[We] also sometimes disabuse students of their expectations around it because it is still quite traditional and I guess it has to be because of the nature of the classrooms that it's delivered in and maybe it's not drawing on people with subject specific knowledge so it's an English teacher who is also teaching Moving Image Arts for instance so I think that teachers are a lot more adrift in that it would be nice to put some support structures around them and do some cross skilling and those sorts of things because it's about confidence building as well more than it is often about knowing what button to press and trying to build across that cross skilling process"

Profile and Type of Student

In the context of the increasing numbers of students taking Moving Image Arts as AS/A-Level, participants were asked to think about whether, in the opinion, this has changed the type and profile of students coming on to Creative Arts degree programmes at University. Most of the participants felt that it has changed the type and profile of students and students were now coming to these degree programmes with more knowledge, awareness and expectation than before. The following quotations illustrate these points:

"So in the past before we had Moving Image Arts, we had a lot of students, and we still have students like this, who are keen to get involved in the area but who come in with little or no experience. In the past, we had students who had very little expectations about what this might be. So they had very little expectations around film production and film history and so on..... they didn't really know what they were getting themselves into although they had a very strong passion or love for film and moving image arts. Now, however, we have students who understand a whole lot more about the film industry and who understand very much about production. Some of the schools are very well geared up, some of the further education colleges are very well geared up with the technology and the studio facilities and the post production facilities that they have...."

The type of student.... They are more aware of what they want... There are those that say, I'm here because I want to develop more of my skills because I would like to become a DOP or editor.... That's the thing, their awareness, they know what they want"

"....the expectations of the students who have Moving Image Arts, what they expect to come to is the next level... not something that is a lower standard or is less well resourced. So what we have had to do is, year on year, is up our game in terms of the resources available to students, the type of technical teaching, the level of production provision and so on has changed because of Moving Image Arts in my view and I think that has changed the expectations of students coming through. And the standard. So we now get a standard where we get students into first year who have some experience of camera, editing and using software and lighting and thinking about green screen and all of these things. So now that we have these students, we have to bring them on, bring them forward, so they are at a higher level coming in than they would have been five or ten years ago and so for us then, we need to react to that and we need to be the third level"

However, other participants disagreed as outlined below:

"I would have said initially that I did notice a slight change in that yes, but not in recent years no. I think certainly since the University has increased its entry requirements, since there has been the crisis about funding of students, particularly in the North, I think one of the inevitable things about that has actually been a narrowing of participation. So more rhetoric about widening participation but much less reality. Moving Image Arts, to me working in film, and it's something I feel very strongly about, would have been something that had the potential to do that but.... But yes initially, you might remember we were getting some students who were quite good from schools [secondary school names] and some students who were coming from schools like [secondary school names] and now I see less of that, yes I do... They'd have come in with an A in Moving Image Arts and that would have lifted them, some of the other grades, whereas now, of course, it doesn't matter...."*

Outcomes

Participants were asked if there was a difference in outcomes for those students who do not have AS/A-Level Moving Image Arts. It was acknowledged by all participants that an accurate answer to this would require some investigation of the outcome compared with facts and figures on how had AS/A-Level Moving Image Arts. However, participants explained that while AS/A-Level Moving Image Arts students may have some advantage in first year of University, that by second year, the advantage over other students had 'levelled out'. The following quotations illustrate these points:

"Sometimes, sometimes... the way our courses are designed, they are designed to level the playing field by the end of Level 1 so that a lot of students..... some students will have strengths where other students don't. So for example, we have had students who have come in with very good A-levels in History and English who would, and there is some evidence for this... do very, very well, there is a correlation between those students and their ability to attain first class degrees at the end of three years because they can do both.... they can write academically and they can do the vocational side also and so, those students are very strong students because they have learned to write very early on, they were good writers at A-level. There is evidence that being able to write and think very well is actually a stronger skill than even working through a more vocational or applied A-level like Moving Image Arts. So, there is an advantage definitely if you are interested in vocational production and so on. There are also advantages to having other strong A-levels like English and History and there is evidence that many of the students that we have in the past 5 or 6 years that have gone forward with first class marks have those A-levels but also now more recently the majority of students would come in with Moving Image Arts"

"What I could say is maybe, those who never did Moving Image Arts but instead did Media Studies or Production may end up doing documentary as a graduation project whereas students with a Moving Image Arts background end up doing drama and very well, actually we have some students who are now competing in Film Festivals, they have done their Moving Image Arts and back then they had their A's as marks and that is why there is a direct correlation"

"Well of course, from our teaching perspective, you assume no previous knowledge, start from scratch and so on. But yeah, in practical ability, some of the technicalities and the understanding of the workings of the camera and framing, movement and skills, editing, there are some advantages. That doesn't mean that that advantage would be maintained across the three years of course, just the beginning. Then it is up to them to develop and it is up to each student to reach that, you know, but there is a little more awareness at the beginning"

Impact on Curriculum

Participants were asked if they felt that AS/A-Level Moving Image Arts has had a direct impact on curriculum design on Creative Arts courses at University. Most participants felt that it had some impact and the quotations below illustrate this:

"Yes, I think it has. So we have students who are coming in with a baseline higher than we used to have five or six years ago. We don't have all of them in that way so we have a mix and we can take nothing for granted so we start at entry level.... at an introductory level, we have grounding modules in film theory, broadcast theory, television theory and so on, that allows everyone to get to a place at the end of first year where the playing field is levelled up. I also think that we are seeing more and more students coming in with production experience, we are also thinking about the level that first years students and second year students and third year students can achieve and we have changed the design of our courses to specify and look at the skill set that they need, the gaps in their skill sets that allow them..... they have always been creative students, all of these students that are pulled to these disciplines are always creative students driven by visual awareness, driven by their own visual literacy but we need to empower them to be able to make good content and the ideas, the scripts and so on. A lot of it is taught, some of it is natural but we take the view that we need to build very strong, very good core skills in cinematography, in editing, in screen writing, in directing for the film programmes and then shooting, editing, voicing, scripting and so on for the more television and radio related programmes"

"Yes, so we would do a lot of digging down and research into the student profiles of our existing students, of the students who have just graduated and our applicants so we are at the point now where they have got their five choices, so what are they studying, where are they coming from, what schools are they coming from, what A-levels are they doing inside those schools, to then do some mapping of the expectations of those students coming in, the curriculum design off the back of it and where you target in terms of market, a linked approach which means that we have to, whenever you design something you have to think about curriculum as a service design, you have to design for a certain audience and a certain baseline so we can kind of go off of the models from the curriculum from Moving Image Arts, but what's our experience of working with schools, in the area and the ones that become feeder schools for us"

There have been some changes to curriculum design since I started working at [University name]. Some of these changes have been aimed to offer far more skill orientated and specific skills. So before it was like more general introduction to another view of filmmaking and so on and so it has been developed by skilled, expert lecturers, modules were more focused, for example, one in cinematography and one in editing. And I believe that these types of modules would not have existed... So I believe that it has had an impact on the practice side, yes"

Standards

Participants were asked if they felt that AS/A-Level Moving Image Arts had changed standards. Overall, most participants felt that it had changed standards although pointed out that evidence would be required to be certain that this was the case. Quotations presented below illustrate this.

"I think it has raised standards. I think its pushed the bar higher and because we have had to take on board that there are a good number of students coming in with a good level of knowledge, they have a good level of resource in their schools, we need to be the next step, we do not need to be something that is primarily the first time that they get exposed to this type of study. That is not often the case now, in fact the majority of the times, they are coming to us with a good bit of knowledge already, having a really strong, often a really strong interest themselves in the area, a love of film, a love of television, journalism, broadcast, whatever it happens to be, we need to build on that, so yeah, the standard when we have one of the top, highest rated courses in the UK at QUB and I think that one of the reasons is largely because our second level of film education or Moving Image Arts education is world class".

"Yes because I believe that the revision that was made two or three years ago was created students that are more knowledgeable on the subject and they perform better"

"Yes and no. So it's difficult because you don't differentiate the classroom... so I have some students in my first year who are consummate film makers and they come in as consummate film makers – those students tend to have studied Moving Image Arts, Media Studies..... But you are teaching those students alongside those students with no experience who have never picked up a camera so that's a kind of complicated classroom but it means that the people who have come in from the back of that benefit highly..."

Expectations

Participants were asked if they felt that AS/A-Level Moving Image Arts had built a greater expectation from students in relation to media, film and television production. Responses to this question were mixed, some participants felt that it had created greater expectation, some felt that these expectations were unrealistic, other participants were unsure if the greater expectation was attributable to Moving Image Arts. The following quotations illustrate this:

“Yes, here’s the thing, now, there may be false expectations and we are trying to address it because what we teach is, there are several outcomes – one, everybody could pick up a certain aspect such as editing, lighting, sound, design and they make excel at it and become technicians in the business but the original course is designed to create creative which means producers, screen writers, directors which is lacking in Northern Ireland in terms of you need somebody, local industry, you would need the creative”

“I think is has informed their expectation but I think it depends what school you are at. Because the classroom delivery is, the geography of the classroom delivery is so different, in different schools and it is resourced differently in different schools. If we take....there is a school in [name of town] who does it fantastically and I won’t name names but I think as people who take students from those courses we know who is doing it well and who is maybe not interpreting the curriculum in a way in which it is meant to be interpreted or any of those sorts of things cause there is some in other areas of Northern Ireland so I can’t say, if you do Moving Image Arts, you will do better because it depends where you studied Moving Image Arts, it will probably depend on your expectations of the course and the depth of your understanding of the production process”

“Again, I don’t know if it’s because of Moving Image Arts but there has been a change in the students, even in the knowledge of students that we recruit. And they ask, like this year I did introduction to the first year at the open days and when you ask if they have any questions many questions were about equipment, about green screen, were about availability of certain types of software. I believe that six years ago that was not that prominent. So there again, something there, part of this is awareness, but also there is a little bit of attention to what they can learn and also what is available to them and equipment, resources and it is a question of infrastructure as well being more and more important for us as well in terms of looking at new facilities also”

“ I don’t know for sure, my sense is that some students who come, and I mean in a lot of schools the kind of equipment and packages that they are working with are kind of basic, you know they are not specialised, well not highly specialised, although that’s not true in some cases when I think about it, but generally they are not so the expectation that the students have when they come here is that the resources that are available, the film making resources, production resources, the equipment that they are going to get access to, the packages that they are going to learn how to use and that would all be of a much higher standard than the basic stuff that they would be using in school and, you know, that’s quite often supported by one technician who is also often the technician for a whole range of other things”

Resultant Changes to Degree Programmes

Participants were asked if, in their opinion, the University has had to change or adjust what they offer to students on relevant degree programmes as a consequence of teaching production at AS/A-Level Moving Image Arts at secondary level. There was a mixed response to this question with some participants agreeing that the University had made changes as a result of Moving Image Arts but other participants stating that changes had been made to degree programmes but as a result of the wider creative industries rather than AS/A-Level Moving Image Arts. The following quotations illustrate this:

"Yes, they have because we need to be the next stage rather than just giving them [students] cameras that are smaller, cheaper; you know a family video type camera... They need to feel that they are coming in and working with industry ready equipment, they want to be industry ready, they want exposure to the processes and the methodologies used in the industry and that's the philosophy that we take for the film practice and the film production on our film degrees and on the broadcast production degrees, we very much look to this as a pre professional stage of their life so, the technology is defined to enhance that, they get taught how to edit at industry standard, they can take industry standard qualifications when they come in to edit in non-linear editing, they do specialist modules in screen writing, specialist modules in cinematography and so on.... and so, yeah, we need to be the next stage up, we need to be the next step, we need to have, you know, equipment that they aspire to work on at industry standard and that has had a very significant impact on, first of all, the design of the courses, the staff that are attracted and attached to them but also the investment that the universities have had to make, the investment has been massive in film and continues to grow because of the scale of the growth in this area and the interest in film and media production at [university name], we are talking millions of pounds in the last few years not just tens of thousands of pounds"

"We introduced new modules, we had planned that one of each would be enough like in editing, but when we realised that students are not that deep in those either so we created further editing modules that looks at more dramatic editing, music video editing and documentary editing as an optional [module] so now that we have seen what is being taught, we have added new modules to make up for anything that is missing. It's really interesting because what happens is this.... Students come with the basic idea of how to do some lighting and framing and camera work so one cinematography module was not enough for them so we added another like lighting module so in a way, they pushed the curriculum to change for more content.... So we had an interdisciplinary approach including [design type modules] so we had multiple courses feeding into the degree and then the students with the Moving Image Arts background objected and said we need only pure film making modules, so we had to get rid of some of the 'helping' modules and create specific cinematic arts modules and that was brought about by student expectations"

"I don't think so.....I don't think it has been Moving Image Arts that has done that. It's more about trying to produce graduates who are industry ready so I think that the pressure to invest in those things has come from the other way, from the media industry and trying to make skilled graduates rather than it comes up the way from the students..... So we bought in people to help us spec the stuff that we have here so that they students can use the same gear here as they can if they go out to work in the media industry. So the pressure on the facilities comes that way round I think rather than it does from an expectation from students to be able to have access to some sort of kit but I think that that is because there is not the investment in the kit in schools so students don't know what would be the right camera to use or shoot or not, they are....as long as they are producing the outputs then that's ok...they wouldn't really know"

Further Comments

Participants were given the chance to make further comments.

Delivery of the curriculum and teaching at secondary school level was an issue raised by some participants as illustrated below:

"I think that the curriculum functions quite well when it's delivered very well and it's down to the teachers inside the room and who you've got on your staff whether you can deliver that thing well or not. I don't think it's an issue in the curriculum, I think it's an issue in the delivery of that curriculum"

[Referring to inconsistent in teaching at secondary school level] "Yes, it is a completely uneven geography but.....maybe that will change as the people who are doing the Moving Image Arts become the teachers and you know, the snake eats its own tail. And maybe we haven't really hit that point yet. And maybe I think that.....so we do Moving Image Arts as a PGCE here but it's an element of a larger thing. You know, you can't train to be a teacher in Moving Image Arts and Media Studies"

"I think it's a social responsibility of the university in that it should make an intervention in that process and to help struggling teachers because primarily our focus is on good education and young people and making things better for young people. So we have, I think, as a University, a social responsibility to make interventions in this space. There was a draft proposal where we would take in every Moving Image Arts teacher from across Northern Ireland and we would do two days training with them and we would do intensive training..... I think that there needs to be more training, I think that we need to, it's what.... ten years old now, we need to start taking it seriously and invest in the up-skilling of the staff and providing CPD around that.... I think that the Universities would be in a good place to do that, to do some training to help cross skill people and to help on the technical things – give them approaches to lesson plans and that kind of stuff which is meaningful for the students and means that they are more confident in the classroom"

Comments were made with regard to the lack of field trips and industry professional involvement in teaching on AS/A-Level Moving Image Arts also:

“Somewhere within these A level/AS level, there needs to be one or two field trips to a studio or working conditions, they need to be able to observe what’s happening in real life. And also ask someone a producer, director to come to class and talk to the students because they are somehow cut off from reality of the business and schools may not at the same time be having the same quality of resources”

Additionally, comments were made on the lack of standardised software and equipment being used at secondary level for Moving Image Arts:

Also, they need to agree on software, for example, everyone should teach the same version of Adobe Premier. Now we have some students having Final Cut Pro experiences, others with, not Avid, but Sony Vegas experience so it’s quite a mixture and that is why I cannot rely on their previous background and it becomes repetitious for some students and for others it is quite new. So my advice is that the technical quality, cameras and the software used needs to be uniform across all schools”

Strand 4: Findings from Interviews with Industry Professionals

Research interviews were undertaken with six industry professionals (producers, directors, sound recordists, casting directors, journalists and camera operators) across a range of creative industry organisations and companies in Northern Ireland. All industry professionals were currently working in the creative industries and all were very experienced and senior in their specific area of expertise. Themes were developed from the interview transcripts and are presented below with direct quotations to illustrate the themes.

Level of Understanding

The industry professional's interviewed for this study did not have an in-depth understanding of AS/A-Level Moving Image Arts. Some were aware of the qualification through their own children, because they had been invited to the annual awards ceremony for Moving Image Arts or because they had been involved in provide online revision resources for the subject through the organisation that they worked for. None had become aware of it professionally.

Perceived Benefits of AS/A-Level Moving Image Arts

All participants felt that there was a benefit to young people undertaking the Moving Image Arts qualification for a variety of reasons including having something to show to prospective employers [a show reel or short film], increased confidence, enhanced communication skills, and good background knowledge of the terminology used in the creative industries. The following quotations illustrate these points:

"Another thing.... is the fact that you actually make things and some of the things I've found, it was difficult to get experience of before starting the [name of organisation] was, people want to see show reels and they want to see what you've made.... when you do the A-Level, you have a little, I mean it mightn't be brilliant, but at least you've got something that you have at least been involved in making. And when you actually do try to make something, you learn a lot more about it and it's also something to show an employer who can see what you've done and, not that it's a show reel but it's useful to have that"

"Yes.... I think there is a confidence about these students. I think they realise that there is an industry here now and there are careers here now and there are jobs and I just think they have a confidence that this is something that they can choose and that they can follow through on.... so I think that it is really important that there is that confidence. When I look back at my own generation I mean the biggest obstacle to us having any kind of achievement in this area was with no confidence, we had no role models and we had little encouragement. You didn't know anybody in the industry, you felt like you were on the outside, I mean, that could still be the case but I feel like this has broken down a lot of barriers, and you know, gave these young people a lot more confidence and made it a lot more approachable"

"I think, one of the advantages is that it encourages better communication skills, I think if you are very interested in this at AS or A Level, I think it can really encourage you to be able to talk to people because if somebody comes to me and they know nothing and they just have a vague notion it can be difficult.... but actually if they can say, well I've done a little bit of editing or you know, we have a little DSLR camera, you'd be more like, well ok, so I actually think it helps people, it grounds people, prepares them for speaking to professionals in the industry and I think it really boosts confidence"

"I think it's also valuable to know that they have spent a bit of time thinking about the various different elements of visual communication and have a baseline understanding of what those different elements are made up of I suppose or how they're made to be. And I would hope that a basic understanding of industry used language and what crew members are responsible for and things like that would be, would also be invaluable for something like that for, you know, if I wanted to hire someone...."

Usefulness of AS/A-Level Moving Image Arts in the Industry

All industry professional participants were very positive about the usefulness of the qualification for people coming to work in the creative industries. The following quotations illustrate this:

“Yes it is a good thing, I think it’s a great thing, I think to kind of have that type of appreciation, also the fact that it’s called Moving Image Arts, I think that the word ‘arts’ is a really important thing, that there is an art to this, that there is a craft to this. You know, art to me is so important because there is a creative process but you also have to be an artisan as well as an artist, there is work to be placed into this, that if you are going to achieve it, you have to learn your craft and I think that there is an appreciation of that. What a lot of young people who I have met.... they haven’t quite found their role yet, but what’s great about something like Moving Image Arts is, that it kind of allows them to try all the different elements, you can be in front of the camera, behind the camera, they can edit, they can try animation, they can have experience of all these things. And then they can find what it is they are passionate about and that kind of propels them forward. It took me a long time to work that kind of stuff out, like years and it took me years in the industry to work that out so they are having a shortcut to that and getting straight in much earlier”

“I think it’s important to have that opportunity, I think anyone who is interested in this kind of industry, to be given any kind of, you know, open door into exploring it is vital because otherwise they are just going to think it’s some kind of unreachable, unattainable industry which it isn’t but it’s very difficult to navigate your path into it and I think it’s actually invaluable to explore what skills they have cause often you find that people can develop the same skills, they all want to be directors and not everybody can be a director but they might actually have a set of skills that are completely invaluable in another area of the industry so to actually start exploring that from any age, I think is vital for the industry”

Impact of AS/A-Level Moving Image Arts on the Creative Industries

There was mixed perceptions about the impact of AS/A-Level Moving Image Arts on the Creative Industries. All participants acknowledged that it was a difficult thing to measure with regards to impact being attributable to Moving Image Arts at a time when the Creative Industries in Northern Ireland were growing at a rapid rate due to other factors as well. The quotations below illustrate these two differing views:

"I think there definitely is an impact, yes, and the level of work that I saw at the awards ceremony and from that, given that there are a lot more young people seeking work in our industry here, it's obviously having a huge impact and it's definitely given me confidence that there are going to be, you know, the seeds are being planted, you know, it's that thing of the cycle I guess and the cycle of apprenticeships as you train people up, they move on and they go and do their own thing so not everyone may stay here but that I was very reassured by that, you know, the seeds are being planted for the next forest to grow so you know, there will be a harvest to reap because you know as everyone's career has developed over the last ten years with the massive boom here if they are all now heads of departments and there's no one underneath them to do what needs to be done, you know, that's not sustainable, so yeah, it definitely reassured me that we were developing something sustainable here"

"I suppose I don't see it, because I don't see people in the industry that are connected right back to that point in their education. When I am meeting people they are generally later on, but I do wonder for instance if we offer placements to people from.... arrange placements for pupils from wherever, do they go on to take up jobs in the industry, I often think about that and I'm not sure that they do. The people that we find and that we work with you do go on to work in the industry tend to come to us a little bit later when I think they have settled down. I don't have evidence of this being a foundation for people who end up in the industry"

"The one thing I can say is that honestly at [name of production company] we do have a lot of students that come on placements, come to work on placement and what I have noticed over the last ten years, and most certainly over the last five years, all of those students would be studying Moving Image Arts. Previously, there would have been none of them studying Moving Image Arts and they would have come from a variety of backgrounds, English students etc. and they wouldn't have necessarily have fitted. Now because they are studying Moving Image, that movement between school and work is a lot easier, they can cut straight into work, whether it be the software that we are using or the post production system that we are using, AVID or whether it's the cameras we are using, they have knowledge of all of those things. Previously, the students who had come on placement had no knowledge, zero knowledge of anything, you know, to do with the production side of it or how anything was made or what the process was. And their questions would have been incredibly basic"

Increase Awareness of all Creative Industry Roles

A point raised by most of the industry professional participants was the need for the AS/A-Level in Moving Image Arts to provide more information during the course about the wide range of roles in the Creative Industries. Most participants felt that students emerged from these types of courses wanting to be only a producer or a director and that an awareness of the wide ranging opportunities in the industry would be beneficial. The quotations below illustrate this:

".....as a sound mixer, nobody wants to work in sound, nobody goes and says I want to work in the film industry and I want to be a props maker, I want to be in set design, 90% of the time it's, I want to be a producer, I want to be a director, I want to be the next Spielberg and it's a slight disconnect with reality because it's a workplace and there are different roles within that industry"

"I think particularly from a young person's year olds point of view, the big benefit would be to show somebody the different paths that are open to you. You know, if you want to work in films, you don't have to necessarily be a director to be successful, you can be hugely successful in other departments in other roles"

"I think it's actually invaluable to explore what skills they have cause often you find that people can develop the same skills, they all want to be directors and not everybody can be a director but they might actually have a set of skills that are completely invaluable in another area of the industry so to actually start exploring that from any age, I think is vital for the industry"

Influence of Moving Image Arts as a qualification

Participants were asked if they had come across the qualification when hiring staff or if the qualification would be an influencing factor in hiring staff. Some participants felt that they would look for experience rather than Moving Image Arts as a qualification and only one participant had come across the qualification on a CV when hiring staff. Other participants felt that now that they were aware of the qualification that they would definitely look out for it with future applicants. The following quotations illustrate this:

"It would be more to do with their experience. And also, kind of what they've done and how they come across in an interview as well when you were recruiting. But you know, in terms of shortlisting somebody, based on the application form, it wouldn't be that qualification in of itself that would influence, it would be maybe what they have produced as part of that qualification"

"No I haven't, it's not a conversation I've had. I haven't actually come across anybody, well to my knowledge who has done the course, who has not openly discussed it anyway"

"No, I would say no actually, I would say definitely not. I am more interested in commitment and to see what people have done with their energy and their time and to see if they have got fire in their belly so I would say probably no"

"It might have a small impact but I think what has a bigger impact from a sound mixers point of view on a show, we get given CVs or CVs get sent to us but what most of us look for is experience with other mixers, if you are applying for a trainee, you'd look to see if they'd done similar work before, that is the main sort of criteria"

"I would have done a lot of recruiting, I wouldn't be as involved in that as I used to be but I do absolutely remember CVs starting to come through with that on it. Our manager would be better placed to say whether any of them got called for interview or anything like that, I'm not sure but I am definitely aware of it and I am definitely aware of the number of young people increasingly that are interested and are wanting to get into the industry, obviously it's hard to tell whether that is because they have a massive show on the doorstep [Game of Thrones] or whether it's because they are allowed to do it syllabus wise but I'd hope that the two were going in tandem"

"I mean I think you would definitely, in this day and age, I think you would definitely look for it, you would definitely look for that qualification. I don't think you would exclude someone who didn't have it because I think, you know, those things can be learned but certainly we look upon what we do as a passion and as a vocation, as a lifetime career and if you have been studying this and you've had this passion since you were young and you studied it through school, it tends to be that that will be a thing that you'll go on to, you know, it's very unlikely that somebody later in life suddenly switches to something like this, you know, to me, it tend to be something that you've been interested in for from a young age and that you follow through"

Discussion

The contextual data shows that the numbers of students undertaking AS and A-Level Moving Image Arts has increased substantially over the last 10 years. Each year since the A-Level began, more boys have undertaken the A-level than girls. However, the gap between boys and girls is closing and in 2016/2017 the numbers were almost equal. The numbers of students at Grammar School undertaking the qualification has also steadily increased over the last 10 years although the numbers taking the qualification at Non-Grammar schools is still higher. Grades achieved for A-Level Moving Image Arts are higher at Grammar Schools than at Non-Grammar schools. The difference is most evident at the top grades of A* and A where Grammar School students achieve a much higher percentage of these grades than Non-Grammar School students. In the last 4 years, boys have achieved more A* grades than girls. Over the last 9 years, girls have consistently achieved more A grades than boys.

The degrees taken at both Universities in Northern Ireland by students of AS/A Level Moving Image Arts are wide ranging. While there are higher numbers taking creative arts degrees, these only account for around 20-30% of the students enrolled on any one of these degrees. Smaller numbers of Moving Image Arts students are undertaking engineering, law, science and social science degrees. Across both universities there have been no more than 26 Moving Image Arts students on any one degree programme in any one year. The numbers of students at University in Northern Ireland in any one year does not account for large numbers of pupils taking the qualification at school. There is no evidence at present to suggest where the rest of these pupils go although it could be assumed that some will go to universities in other countries.

Findings from the survey within this study support contextual findings around the types of university degrees undertaken. Most respondents to the survey were undertaking or had undertaken creative arts degrees, with smaller numbers undertaking law or social science degrees. The majority of respondents found Moving Image Arts useful and helpful with their degree.

A smaller percentage of the sample were in employment. The vast majority of these respondents had previously attended University. As before, the majority of these degrees were taken in Creative Arts programmes. Two thirds of those in employment stated that their current job was related to Moving Image Arts. Of these jobs, most were in Film and Television with a smaller amount working in animation. The vast majority of these respondents stated that Moving Image Arts was useful in relation to their job. A small percentage stated that they were self-employed. One third of employed respondents were not employed in a role related to the creative arts including store associates, sales assistants, secretaries and customer service advisers.

The main reasons given by respondents for choosing Moving Image Arts at AS/A-Level were for enjoyment, a love for film and a desire to work in the creative industries. The most enjoyable aspects of the AS/A-Level for respondents were the creativity, the autonomy and freedom awarded and the practical skills taught. Many respondents stated that they enjoyed everything about the course. Less enjoyable reasons were identified as problems with teaching, teachers not being trained in practical skills needed for the course, no provision of information on jobs or opportunities in the industry, the theory and history aspects of the course, lack of equipment, poor quality equipment, an inconsistency in the type of equipment available, lack of funding, the amount of time required for pre and post production activities, no teaching on script writing, no teamwork or collaboration and no real life work experience.

The vast majority of respondents stated that they would recommend AS/A-Level Moving Image Arts to other. The types of people they would recommend it to included creative people, people interested in film and television, people with vision, those interested in storytelling, artistic people and people who think outside the box. Those respondents who would not recommend the AS/A-Level gave reasons which centred on the lack of jobs, support and opportunity to get into the creative industries in Northern Ireland. Poor teaching was also given as a reason for not recommending the qualification. Overall there was a high level of satisfaction with the AS/A-Level in Moving Image Arts.

Most survey respondents felt that AS/A-Level Moving Image Arts had influenced their choice of course at University or Further Education College. This would indicate that the AS/A-Level is having an impact on educational choices and pathways. Most of these respondents indicated that the AS/A-Level had confirmed that it was what they wanted to study and pursue for a career, others stated that doing the AS/A-Level had changed the direction that they were going towards the creative arts. As with choice of educational pathway, the majority of respondents also stated that the AS/A-Level had influenced their choice of career. This shows that the AS/A-Level is having an impact on career choices as well as educational choices. Reasons given as to how the AS/A-Level influenced choice of career included inspiration, the choice of different types of jobs within the industry, confirmation that it was the career they wanted and provision of a clearer direction. Most current university student respondents who answered this question indicated that they were pursuing a career in the creative arts including working in film, acting, photography, media marketing and advertising. Small percentages were undecided or pursuing further study.

Only small numbers of survey respondents had attended BFI Academies. Of these respondents, almost half attended Cinemagic, with smaller numbers attending AmmA, Nerve Belfast or Nerve Derry. All found their attendance at the BFI Academies 'very helpful' or 'helpful'. Particularly helpful aspects included editing, getting out of the classroom, working with industry professionals and industry equipment, networking, working with inspirational filmmakers and being able to make their own films and film sets. Suggestions for improvements to the BFI Academies included having more remote workshops, possibly school clusters, needing more funding, better linked to AS/A-Level Moving Image Arts, inclusion of animation, more hands on and less elitist. Just over half of those respondents who attended BFI Academies stated that it had influenced their choice of further or higher educational course and over two thirds stated that it had influenced their choice of career.

Throughout the survey and in the further comments section, real life work experience was an issue that was raised frequently. Respondents felt that some type of placement or work experience would be an added benefit to the AS/A-Level in Moving Image Arts as being solely in the classroom did not provide a real 'feel' for being on a set or working in the

creative industries. A related issue raised frequently was that the AS/A-Level provides no insight into the realities of the industry, including how to get a job in the industry and what to expect if you do choose a career in the industry.

Another issue that was raised frequently was the lack of teamwork within the AS/A-Level, considering that working in the creative industries requires collaboration and teamwork, respondents felt that this was lacking.

Teaching was another issue which was raised repeatedly across survey responses. While it is not a new issue, respondents felt that teachers were not qualified to teach the AS/A-Level, particularly in terms of practical skills (cameras, editing) and that in some cases the students were more skilled than the teachers. This is an issue which requires further exploration and consideration of training and support for teachers of Moving Image Arts in Northern Ireland. Furthermore, some respondents felt that the course content was not challenging enough, which may be linked to the limitations of teaching and funding around the subject.

There was variation in the level of understanding that University academic participants had about AS/A-Level Moving Image Arts. All academic participants knew about it and the basics of it but some had a substantial level of knowledge of it and others had a limited knowledge of it. The level of awareness of the course content of the AS/A-Level was also mixed among academic participants. All academic participants felt that the content of the AS/A-Level was well connected to their area of teaching at University. The skills taught on the As/A-level were pertinent to the first year content at University and those who had taken Moving Image Arts as an A-Level had the advantage of being familiar with equipment, software and terminology. The useful aspects of this mainly focused on technical and practical skills (cameras, editing), screenwriting, language and terminology associated with the creative arts, film and television. Challenges for AS/A-Level Moving Image Arts perceived by some of the academic participants included the lack of inclusion of digital media and emerging immersive formats, multi-platform delivery. Some concern was expressed that the AS/A-Level could be left behind if it did not adapt to include these areas. This will also pose challenges for teaching and funding.

At present, AS/A-Level Moving Image Arts is not a pre-requisite qualification for entry onto any university degree in Northern Ireland nor is any preference given to students with the qualification. This may account for the lower numbers of AS/A-Level Moving Image Arts students than might be expected on University degrees in Northern Ireland. Accurate and complete evidence for final destinations of AS/A-Level Moving Image Arts students is not available at present. This is addressed in the recommendations section of this report.

Academic participants felt that there were benefits to students having Moving Image Arts at AS/A-Level for similar reasons outlined above (technical and practical skills, screenwriting experience and familiarity with film language and terminology). All academic participants felt that this was of benefit to students on their degree programmes in the first year but that by second year of the degree all students on the degree were at the same level regardless of having taken AS/A-Level Moving Image Arts. This is attributable to the fact that University degrees have no requirement or pre-requisite for having Moving Image Arts at AS/A-Level and as such begin teaching from scratch rather than building on skills attained from AS/A-Level Moving Image Arts. The smaller than expected numbers of AS/A-Level Moving Image Arts may also be attributed to the high tariff entry set by Universities in Northern Ireland for creative arts courses and that a lot of AS/A-Level Moving Image Arts students would not attain those grades at A-level to secure entry. Even if they have a high grade in AS/A-Level Moving Image Arts, they may not in other subjects. There is not a complete or accurate picture of this at present and this would require further exploration as suggested in the recommendations from this report.

Some academic participants felt that there were some aspects of AS/A-Level Moving Image Arts that were not of benefit to students including picking up 'bad habits' and inflated ideas about their own skills and capabilities, prescribed ideas about film, undeveloped story ideas and some naivety. Expectations were also considered to be quite traditional perhaps due to the nature of the school environment or the teaching. Teaching of the AS/A-Level in Moving Image Arts was an issue also raised by academic participants, similarly to survey respondents, and concern expressed for the standard and quality of the teaching due to lack of practical skills. It was felt that support and training was necessary for teachers and funding for this was essential. It was not felt that the curriculum of AS/A-Level was a

problem but that the delivery of this curriculum required exploration. Up-skilling of teachers of AS/A-Level Moving Image Arts was considered necessary and that Universities may have a role in the provision of those skills to teachers.

Most academic participants felt that the type and profile of students coming onto their degree programmes had changed since AS/A-Level Moving Image Arts was introduced. Those students with the qualification were more aware of what they wanted and of the area, they expected more in terms of teaching and equipment and they had a higher level of knowledge than other students at the beginning of the degree. However, as previously referred to, students without the qualification had “caught up” by second year of the degree due to the degree being taught “from scratch” due to there being no requirement or pre-requisite to have Moving Image Arts at AS/A-Level. With regards to the ‘expectations’ of students with AS/A-Level Moving Image Arts, some academic participants felt that it had created greater expectation but some participants felt that these increased expectations were unrealistic.

In relation to outcomes from degree programmes for those who have AS/A-Level Moving Image Arts and those who do not, while there is no statistical evidence for this collected within this study, all academic participants felt that there was no difference in outcomes due to the same reasons outlined previously regarding the degrees beginning at the start and not building on the AS/A-level.

Some academic participants felt that the AS/A-Level in Moving Image Arts had some impact on the curriculum that they taught at University. While these degrees start at the beginning of the subject, changes have been incorporated across degree programmes to accommodate students coming with advanced skills while at the same time bringing along those students who have come in with no experience or advanced skills. However, other participants felt that any changes that had been made to the curriculum or structure of degree programmes was not as a response AS/A-Level Moving Image Arts but to the wider creative industries in Northern Ireland and the growth in that area over the last 10 years. In relation to standards, most academic participants felt that standards had risen over the

years but that they had no evidence to attribute that to AS/A-Level Moving Image Arts and that it was purely based on their own opinions.

Similarly to survey respondents views, the lack of work experience/field trips were referred to by academic participants and it was felt that this would be an additional benefit to students. Academic participants also raised concerns about the lack of standardised equipment and software being used at secondary level by AS/A-Level Moving Image Arts students provided by schools. It was acknowledged that this would require further exploration and funding.

Industry Professional participants had a low level of awareness and understanding of both AS/A-Level Moving Image Arts as a qualification and of the course content. Some industry professional participants did not know anything about the qualification. Of those who did know about it, their knowledge of it had not coming through the industry or their job but as a parent or having been invited to the annual awards ceremony.

All industry professional participants felt that the AS/A-Level was a benefit to young people for reasons including having something to show to prospective employers in the form of a short film, increased confidence and enhanced communication skills. All participants felt that it was a useful qualification to have for people interested in working in the creative industries.

There was a mixed response to whether the AS/A-Level had had an impact on the creative industries. Participants felt it was difficult to attribute the increase in young people wanting to work in the creative industries to AS/A-Level Moving Image Arts alone at a time when the creative industries in Northern Ireland were enjoying rapid growth but some felt that the qualification must have had an impact in encouraging young people into the area.

An important point raised by industry professional participants was that most young people wanting to work in the creative industries wanted to be a director or a producer and that an awareness of other roles in the industry was lacking. It was suggested that AS/A-Level Moving Image Arts could be used to inform and give insight to young people about the

wider range of roles and careers in the creative industries. For example, one industry professional was concerned that acting and the skills required to act for film and television rather than the theatre were not being addressed at secondary level in Northern Ireland and that Moving Image Arts programmes could help address this in some way. The concern extended to the focus being on craft and skills development and not on on-screen talent in NI.

In terms of AS/A-Level Moving Image Arts as an influencer in hiring staff, most industry professional participants felt that it would be experience rather than the qualification that would influence them when hiring staff. However, some participants did acknowledge that the experience gained through the AS/A-Level would be useful. Only one industry professional participant recalled seeing the qualification on a CV.

Conclusion

There is no doubt that AS/A-Level Moving Image Arts is an extremely successful, beneficial and useful qualification for young people wanting to pursue further education and a career in the creative industries. The large amount of data collected during this study across surveys and interviews has evidenced the impact that the qualification has had on young people, on educational and career choices, on universities and to some extent the creative industries themselves. It is difficult to attribute impact on the Creative Industries to Moving Image Arts alone particularly at a time of major growth in the industry in Northern Ireland, however, the numbers of students taking AS/A-Level Moving Image Arts has grown and continues to grow, substantially over the last 10 years which in itself is a major contributor to the Creative Industries both in Northern Ireland and further afield. Further targeted exploration will provide further evidence to clearly demonstrate the valuable impact that this qualification has had and will continue to have.

Recommendations

Recommendations for AS/A-Level Moving Image Arts

- Consideration should be given to standardising the type, age and level of equipment being used by schools to teach Moving Image Arts AS/A Level to ensure equality of access across schools. Streamlining of training and supporting materials may result.
- It is recommended that consideration is given to the level of 'real-world' work experience and placement included in the current AS/A-Level Moving Image Arts.
- Consideration should be giving to the inclusion of teamwork and collaboration within the AS/A-Level to reflect methods of working in the Creative Industries.
- It is recommended that consideration is giving to including an exploration of the wide range of roles in the Creative Industries in the curriculum content of the AS/A-Level.
- Consideration should be given to the provision of initial and on-going training for teachers of Moving Image Arts at AS/A-Level to enhance and support their skills in the classroom.
- Talks/input from industry professionals into the AS/A Level is recommended to give a clearer idea of what it is actually like to work in the creative industry.
- Talks/input at school level from University academics and/or Further Education teachers is recommended to provide clear details on courses that Moving Image Arts students could take.

Recommendations relating to Academics/Universities

- It is recommended that awareness raising activities are implemented for Moving Image Arts qualifications among Creative Arts Academic teaching staff at Universities.
- Consideration should be given to how best Academics and Universities can support and be involved in training of teachers at secondary level to best deliver the curriculum content of the AS/A-Level.

Recommendations relating to Industry Professionals

- It is recommended that awareness raising activities for the Moving Image Arts qualifications are undertaken among industry professionals across a wide range of organisations and companies in Northern Ireland.

Recommendations for Further Research

- It is recommended that further research in this area should be undertaken with current teachers of AS and A Level Moving Image Arts to ascertain their views and perceptions of teaching Moving Image Arts. This research should include evaluation of support among teaching staff for further training and what this may be (short training courses, PGCE etc.)
- Research to ascertain the views and perceptions of school principals whose schools teach Moving Image Arts is recommended. The challenges for the schools should also be explored within this work.
- An evaluation of equipment being used across schools teaching AS/A Level Moving Image Arts is recommended.
- It is clear from this study that only a small proportion of students with AS/A-Level Moving Image Arts are going to either university in Northern Ireland in any one year. It is recommended that further research be undertaken to ascertain the final destinations of AS/A-Level Moving Image Arts students over the course of one full year.
- Further to the recommendation above, it is also recommended that a database of students who take Moving Image Arts be developed and maintained (with student's consent) for tracking purposes in terms of final destinations from the present over a period of five years. After this period of five years, accurate evidence can be ascertained about the journey and final educational and career destinations of Moving Image Arts students.
- An examination of the influence the GCSE in Moving Image Arts has had in this area is required. In particular, how this GCSE feeds into a route to industry via FE colleges and the role FE play in the pipeline to creative industries.

- Some further research that explores teaching quality and student performance at A-level may be required to understand the role of specialist teaching in this area and the results needed for entry into NI Universities.
- It's likely MIA AS/A-Level is also impacting the creative industries elsewhere in the UK. When comparing the number of students taking the qualification in NI at school level to the numbers at university in NI holding an AS/A-Level in Moving Image Arts. Further research is required to understand where the remainder are going, the scale, what motivates this movement away from NI and the impact this is having on the creative industries here.

Summary of Key Findings

Key Contextual Findings

- The numbers of students undertaking AS/A-Level Moving Image Arts has increased steadily over the last ten years.
- The numbers of boys is higher than the number of girls undertaking the qualification although the gap has narrowed in recent years.
- The numbers of students at Grammar Schools taking the qualification has steadily increased over the last ten years although the numbers taking the qualification at Non-Grammar School is still higher.
- Grades achieved are higher at Grammar Schools than Non-Grammar Schools.
- In the last four years, boys have achieved more A* grades than girls.
- Over the last nine years, girls have consistently achieved more A grades than boys.
- University degrees undertaken by students with AS/A-Level Moving Image Arts are wide ranging.
- While there are higher numbers of students with AS/A-Level Moving Image Arts on Creative Arts degrees than other degrees, these only account for 20-30% of the intake on those degree programmes. \

Key Survey Findings

- 89% of respondents currently at University found AS/A-Level Moving Image Arts useful for their degree.
- 91% of respondents currently at University found that AS/A-Level Moving Image Arts had helped them, to date, with their degree.
- 67% of respondents currently in employment stated that their job was related to Moving Image Arts.
- 90% of respondents in employment related to Moving Image Arts stated that the AS/A-Level had been useful in relation to their job.
- Reasons given by respondents from choosing Moving Image Arts at AS/A-Level included having enjoyed it at GCSE, their love for film and a desire to work in the creative industries.
- Enjoyable aspects of the AS/A-Level were identified as the creativity it afforded, autonomy, freedom and the practical aspects of the course.
- Less enjoyable aspects were identified as teachers who were not trained in Moving Image Arts, lack of information on jobs and opportunities in the industry, theoretical and historical aspects of the course, the lack of equipment, poor quality of equipment, lack of funding, the amount of time required for pre and post-production, lack of teaching on scriptwriting, lack of teamwork and collaboration and lack of work experience.
- 94% of respondents stated that they would recommend the AS/A-Level to others; 6% stated that they would not recommend it.
- The level of satisfaction with the AS/A-Level Moving Image Arts was rated overall as 8 out of 10.
- 89% of respondents stated that Moving Image Arts had influenced their choice of course at University or Further Education College.
- 90% of respondents stated that Moving Image Arts had influenced their choice of career.
- 25% of respondents had attended a BFI Academy.
- Of those respondents who had attended a BFI Academy, 72% found the workshops 'very helpful' and 28% found the workshops 'helpful'.

- The aspects of the BFI Academies that were found to be helpful included editing, getting out of the classroom, working with industry professionals and industry equipment, inspirational filmmakers, networking and being able to make your own film.
- 56% of those respondents who had attended workshops at BFI Academies stated that it did influence their choice of further and higher education course and 71% stated that it had influenced their choice of career.
- Issues raised frequently across responses to the survey included:
 - Placements or work experience would be beneficial to include in the AS/A-Level;
 - Insight into the realities of working in the industry would be helpful to include in the AS/A-Level;
 - The lack of teamwork and collaboration within the AS/A-Level seems at odds with the way the creative industries work;
 - Teachers not being qualified to teach Moving Image Arts at AS/A-Level.

Key Findings from Academic Interviews

- There was variation in the level of understanding of the AS/A-Level in Moving Image Arts among academic participants and in the course content.
- All academic participants felt that the content of the AS/A-Level was well connected to their area of teaching at University.
- Skills taught on the AS/A-Level were pertinent to first year content at University and those who had taken the qualification had the benefit of being familiar with equipment, software and film language and terminology.
- Academic participants felt that by second year at University, any advantage that AS/A-Level Moving Image Arts students may have had in second year was equalised with other students by this stage.
- Academic participants perceived challenges for AS/A-Level Moving Image Arts as being the lack of inclusion of digital media, emerging immersive formats and multi-platform delivery.
- AS/A-Level Moving Image Arts is not a pre-requisite qualification for any creative arts course at either University in Northern Ireland.

- Teaching of the AS/A-Level was raised as a concern by academic participants in relation to the standard and quality of the delivery of the curriculum. It was felt that support and training was required for these teachers and that the Universities could have a role in this training and support.
- Academic participants mostly felt that there has been some impact on changes to the curriculum on their degrees as a result of students coming onto the courses with AS/A-Level Moving Image Arts.
- Most academic participants felt that the type and profile of students had changed coming onto their degree programme and that some of this could be attributed to AS/A-Level Moving Image Arts.

Key Findings from Industry Professional Interviews

- Industry professional participants had a lower level of awareness and understanding of the AS/A-Level as a qualification and of the course content.
- Some industry professional participants had not encountered anyone with the qualification in the industry to the best of their knowledge.
- All industry professional participants felt that the AS/A-Level in Moving Image Arts was a benefit to young people wanting to work in the creative industries.
- There was mixed opinions as to whether the AS/A-Level had had an impact on the creative industries with participants feeling it was difficult to attribute the increase in young people wanting to work in the creative industries to Moving Image Arts alone considering the growth in the industry for other reasons as well.
- Industry professional participants felt that a lot of young people come into the creative industries wanting to be only a director or a producer and that awareness of other roles in the industry was lacking. Some felt that this raising of awareness could be done through AS/A-Level Moving Image Arts.
- Participants also felt that experience was still more important when looking for people to work in the creative industries than AS/A-Level qualifications but did acknowledge that the experience gained through the AS/A-Level and the short film produced were a great benefit to young people to demonstrate that experience.

Contact Details:

If you wish to discuss any aspect of the research, please contact:

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School of Arts, English & Languages

Queens University Belfast

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Appendix 1: Survey Participant Information Sheet

Participant Information Sheet for Questionnaire Participants

Study Title

An Exploration of the Impact of AS/A-Level Moving Image Arts on the Creative Industries in Northern Ireland

Invitation Paragraph

You are being invited to take part in a research study funded by Northern Ireland Screen and being undertaken by Dr Declan Keeney from Queens University Belfast. Before you decide whether or not to take part it is important that you understand what the research is for and what it would involve for you. Please take the time to read the following information carefully. Do not hesitate to ask any questions about anything you are unclear about. Thank you for taking the time to consider this invitation.

What is the purpose of this study?

The purpose of this study is to determine the impact that AS/A-Level Moving Image Arts has had on the Creative Industries in Northern Ireland.

Why have I been chosen?

You have been chosen to take part in this study because you have previously undertaken either AS or A-Level Moving Image Arts.

Do I have to take part?

Taking part in this research is entirely voluntary and it is to you to decide if you want to participate. If you choose to take part, you can still change your mind at any time and withdraw from the study without giving a reason.

What will I have to do?

If you are happy to take part in the study, please click on the link included with the email you received and complete the questions online. You will be asked questions about why you chose Moving Image Arts at AS/A-Level, how you feel it helped you in their chosen educational/career pathway, what you are studied in further or higher education (if applicable), what career path you chose and how Moving Image Arts helped with that and your current employment situation at the time of the study. The questionnaire is completely anonymous and you will not be asked for your name at any time.

Are there any risks to taking part?

There are no risks to taking part in the study.

Are there any possible benefits in taking part?

You will not benefit directly from this study however the information gathered may help to improve the understanding of the impact that AS/A level Moving Image Arts has had on the creative industries in Northern Ireland and assist in future planning.

What happens when the study ends?

Once all the data from the questionnaires have been analysed, a final report will be written for the funders (Northern Ireland Screen).

What if something goes wrong?

Queens University Belfast has procedures for reporting, investigating, recording and handling adverse events. Any complaints will be taken seriously and in the unlikely event that something goes wrong and if you wish to make a complaint about the way you have been dealt with during this study this will be addressed. Please contact Dr Declan Keeney if you wish to make a complaint.

Will my taking part in this study be kept confidential?

Your confidentiality will be safeguarded at all times during and after the study is complete. You will not be identifiable at any point of the research. All data collected will be anonymous. Hard copy data will be store in a locked filing cabinet at Queens University Belfast. Electronic data will be stored on a university password protected computer. Data will be retained for 10 years and then destroyed accordingly in line with ethical requirements.

What will happen to the results of the study?

The results from the study will be presented in a report to the funder (Northern Ireland Screen). There may also be publications in professional or academic journals reporting on the results from the study.

Contact details

If you require further information or would like to discuss the study further, please contact Dr Declan Keeney, Head of Broadcast Production, Queens University Belfast on 02890 973091 or by email d.keeney@qub.ac.uk

THANK YOU FOR TAKING THE TIME TO READ THIS INFORMATION SHEET

Appendix 2: Academics Participant Information Sheet

Participant Information Sheet for Academics Interviews

Study Title

An Exploration of the Impact of AS/A-Level Moving Image Arts on the Creative Industries in Northern Ireland

Invitation Paragraph

You are being invited to take part in a research study funded by Northern Ireland Screen and being undertaken by Dr Declan Keeney from Queens University Belfast. Before you decide whether or not to take part it is important that you understand what the research is for and what it would involve for you. Please take the time to read the following information carefully. Do not hesitate to ask any questions about anything you are unclear about. Thank you for taking the time to consider this invitation.

What is the purpose of this study?

The purpose of this study is to determine the impact that AS/A-Level Moving Image Arts has had on the Creative Industries in Northern Ireland. Interviews will be undertaken with academics and industry professionals and past students of AS/A level Moving Image Arts will be surveyed.

Why have I been chosen?

You have been chosen to take part in this study because you are currently working in the creative industries in Northern Ireland and have been involved in creative arts industry for at least the last five years in Northern Ireland.

Do I have to take part?

Taking part in this research is entirely voluntary and it is to you to decide if you want to participate. If you choose to take part, you can still change your mind at any time and withdraw from the study without giving a reason.

What will I have to do?

If you agree to take part, you will also be asked to sign a consent form as a record of your consent to take part and that you understand what the study entails. You will then take part in an interview with the researcher who will ask you about your views on Moving Image Arts AS/A-Level and your views on the impact it has had on students and third level education since it began. The interview will last no longer than one hour. The interview will be audio-recorded with your permission. If you have any questions or concerns these will be addressed by the researcher, prior to the interview.

Are there any risks to taking part?

There are no risks to taking part in the study.

Are there any possible benefits in taking part?

You will not benefit directly from this study however the information gathered may help to improve the understanding of the impact that AS/A level Moving Image Arts has had on the creative industries in Northern Ireland and assist in future planning.

What happens when the study ends?

The audio recordings for all the interviews conducted for this study will be transcribed and analysed by the researcher. A final report containing all the findings from this study will be written by the researcher and provided to the funder (Northern Ireland Screen). A copy of the final report will be sent to all study participants.

What if something goes wrong?

Queens University Belfast has procedures for reporting, investigating, recording and handling adverse events. Any complaints will be taken seriously and in the unlikely event that something goes wrong and if you wish to make a complaint about the way you have been dealt with during this study this will be addressed. Please contact Dr Declan Keeney if you wish to make a complaint.

Will my taking part in this study be kept confidential?

Your confidentiality will be safeguarded at all times during and after the study is complete. You will not be identifiable at any point of the research. All audio recordings and subsequent transcriptions will be anonymous. Audio recordings and hard copy transcripts will be kept in a locked filing cabinet at Queens University Belfast. Data will be retained for 10 years and then destroyed accordingly in line with ethical requirements.

What will happen to the results of the study?

The results from the study will be presented in a report to the funder (Northern Ireland Screen). There may also be publications in professional or academic journals reporting on the results from the study.

Contact details

If you require further information or would like to discuss the study further, please contact Dr Declan Keeney, Head of Broadcast Production, Queens University Belfast on 02890 973091 or by email d.keeney@qub.ac.uk

THANK YOU FOR TAKING THE TIME TO READ THIS INFORMATION SHEET

Appendix 3: Academics Consent Form

Participant Consent Form for Academic Interviews

Name of Researcher: Dr Declan Keeney

Title of study: An Exploration of the Impact of AS/A-Level Moving Image Arts on the Creative Industries in Northern Ireland

Please Tick Each Box

1. I confirm that I have been given and have read and understood the information sheet for the above study. I have had the opportunity to consider the information and asked questions, which have been answered to my satisfaction. ☐
2. I understand that my participation is voluntary and that I am free to withdraw at any time without giving a reason and without my rights being affected in any way. ☐
3. I understand that the researcher will hold all information and data collected securely and in confidence and that all efforts will be made to ensure that I cannot be identified as a participant in the study and I give permission for the researchers to hold relevant personal data. ☐
4. I consent to the interview being audio recorded and anonymised quotations to be used in resultant reports and/or publications. ☐
5. I agree to take part in the above study. ☐

Participant Name:		Researchers Name:	
Participant Signature:		Researchers Signature:	
Date:		Date:	

Appendix 4: Academics Interview Schedule

Interview Schedule for Academics

1. What is your level of understanding of AS/A Level Moving Image Arts subject at secondary level?
2. What do you teach at University?
3. How does this A/AS level subject connect to your own subject area at University?
4. Is the A level required? Is preference given to those students with it?
5. In your view, what benefits does AS/A Level Moving Image Arts offer to those students coming to study your degree programme(s) at University?
6. There has been a huge increase in the uptake of AS/A level Moving Image Arts in the last 10 years. How has the increase in uptake of AS/A Level Moving Image Arts students changed the profile or type of student undertaking your degree programme(s)?
7. Has AS/A Level Moving Image Arts had a direct impact on curriculum design in your subject area?
8. Has AS/A Level Moving Image Arts built a greater expectation from students in relation to media/television/film production?
9. As a consequence of the teaching of production within AS/A Level Moving Image Arts at secondary school level, has the university had to adjust what they offer to students on relevant degree programmes?
10. Have you any other comments that you would like to make?

Appendix 5: Industry Professionals Participant Information Sheet

Participant Information Sheet for Industry Professional Interviews

Study Title

An Exploration of the Impact of AS/A-Level Moving Image Arts on the Creative Industries in Northern Ireland

Invitation Paragraph

You are being invited to take part in a research study funded by Northern Ireland Screen and being undertaken by Dr Declan Keeney from Queens University Belfast. Before you decide whether or not to take part it is important that you understand what the research is for and what it would involve for you. Please take the time to read the following information carefully. Do not hesitate to ask any questions about anything you are unclear about. Thank you for taking the time to consider this invitation.

What is the purpose of this study?

The purpose of this study is to determine the impact that AS/A-Level Moving Image Arts has had on the Creative Industries in Northern Ireland. Interviews will be undertaken with academics and industry professionals and past students of AS/A level Moving Image Arts will be surveyed.

Why have I been chosen?

You have been chosen to take part in this study because you are currently working in the creative industries in Northern Ireland and have been involved in creative arts industry for at least the last five years in Northern Ireland.

Do I have to take part?

Taking part in this research is entirely voluntary and it is to you to decide if you want to participate. If you choose to take part, you can still change your mind at any time and withdraw from the study without giving a reason.

What will I have to do?

If you agree to take part, you will also be asked to sign a consent form as a record of your consent to take part and that you understand what the study entails. You will then take part in an interview with the researcher who will ask you about your views on AS/A level Moving Image Arts and your views on the impact it has had on the creative industries in Northern Ireland. The interview will last no longer than one hour. The interview will be audio-recorded with your permission. If you have any questions or concerns these will be addressed by the researcher, prior to the interview.

Are there any risks to taking part?

There are no risks to taking part in the study.

Are there any possible benefits in taking part?

You will not benefit directly from this study however the information gathered may help to improve the understanding of the impact that AS/A level Moving Image Arts has had on the creative industries in Northern Ireland and assist in future planning.

What happens when the study ends?

The audio recordings for all the interviews conducted for this study will be transcribed and analysed by the researcher. A final report containing all the findings from this study will be written by the researcher and provided to the funder (Northern Ireland Screen). A copy of the final report will be sent to all study participants.

What if something goes wrong?

Queens University Belfast has procedures for reporting, investigating, recording and handling adverse events. Any complaints will be taken seriously and in the unlikely event that something goes wrong and if you wish to make a complaint about the way you have been dealt with during this study this will be addressed. Please contact Dr Declan Keeney if you wish to make a complaint.

Will my taking part in this study be kept confidential?

Your confidentiality will be safeguarded at all times during and after the study is complete. You will not be identifiable at any point of the research. All audio recordings and subsequent transcriptions will be anonymous. Audio recordings and hard copy transcripts will be kept in a locked filing cabinet at Queens University Belfast. Data will be retained for 10 years and then destroyed accordingly in line with ethical requirements.

What will happen to the results of the study?

The results from the study will be presented in a report to the funder (Northern Ireland Screen). There may also be publications in professional or academic journals reporting on the results from the study.

Contact details

If you require further information or would like to discuss the study further, please contact Dr Declan Keeney, Head of Broadcast Production, Queens University Belfast on 02890 973091 or by email d.keeney@qub.ac.uk

THANK YOU FOR TAKING THE TIME TO READ THIS INFORMATION SHEET

Appendix 6: Industry Professionals Consent Form

Participant Consent Form for Industry Professionals Interviews

Name of Researcher: Dr Declan Keeney

Title of study: An Exploration of the Impact of AS/A-Level Moving Image Arts on the Creative Industries in Northern Ireland

Please Tick Each Box

1. I confirm that I have been given and have read and understood the information sheet for the above study. I have had the opportunity to consider the information and asked questions, which have been answered to my satisfaction. ☐
2. I understand that my participation is voluntary and that I am free to withdraw at any time without giving a reason and without my rights being affected in any way. ☐
3. I understand that the researcher will hold all information and data collected securely and in confidence and that all efforts will be made to ensure that I cannot be identified as a participant in the study and I give permission for the researchers to hold relevant personal data. ☐
4. I consent to the interview being audio recorded and anonymised quotations to be used in resultant reports and/or publications. ☐
5. I agree to take part in the above study. ☐

Participant Name:		Researchers Name:	
Participant Signature:		Researchers Signature:	
Date:		Date:	

Appendix 7: Industry Professionals Interview Schedule

Interview Schedule for Industry Professionals

1. What is your level of understanding of AS/A Level Moving Image Arts subject at secondary level?
2. Is the Moving Image Arts A-Level important for working in the Creative Industries in Northern Ireland? Is it important for people to have this qualification or to do this qualification at A-level to go on to work in the Creative Industries?
3. In your view, what benefits, if any, does A-Level Moving Image Arts offer to those people coming to work in your organisation/in the Creative Industries?
4. There has been a huge increase in the uptake of A-Level Moving Image Arts in the last 10 years. Has this increase in uptake of A-Level Moving Image Arts students been noticeable in your organisation/in the Creative Industries?
5. What impact, in your opinion, has Moving Image Arts A-Level had on the Creative Industries in Northern Ireland?
6. If you were recruiting someone to your organisation/to the Creative Industries, would the A-Level Moving Image Arts be something you would ask for/like them to have?
7. Have you any other comments that you would like to make?